None of the Above for President *The Editors*

Reagan's World • Begin's Troubles • Charity in Jackboots

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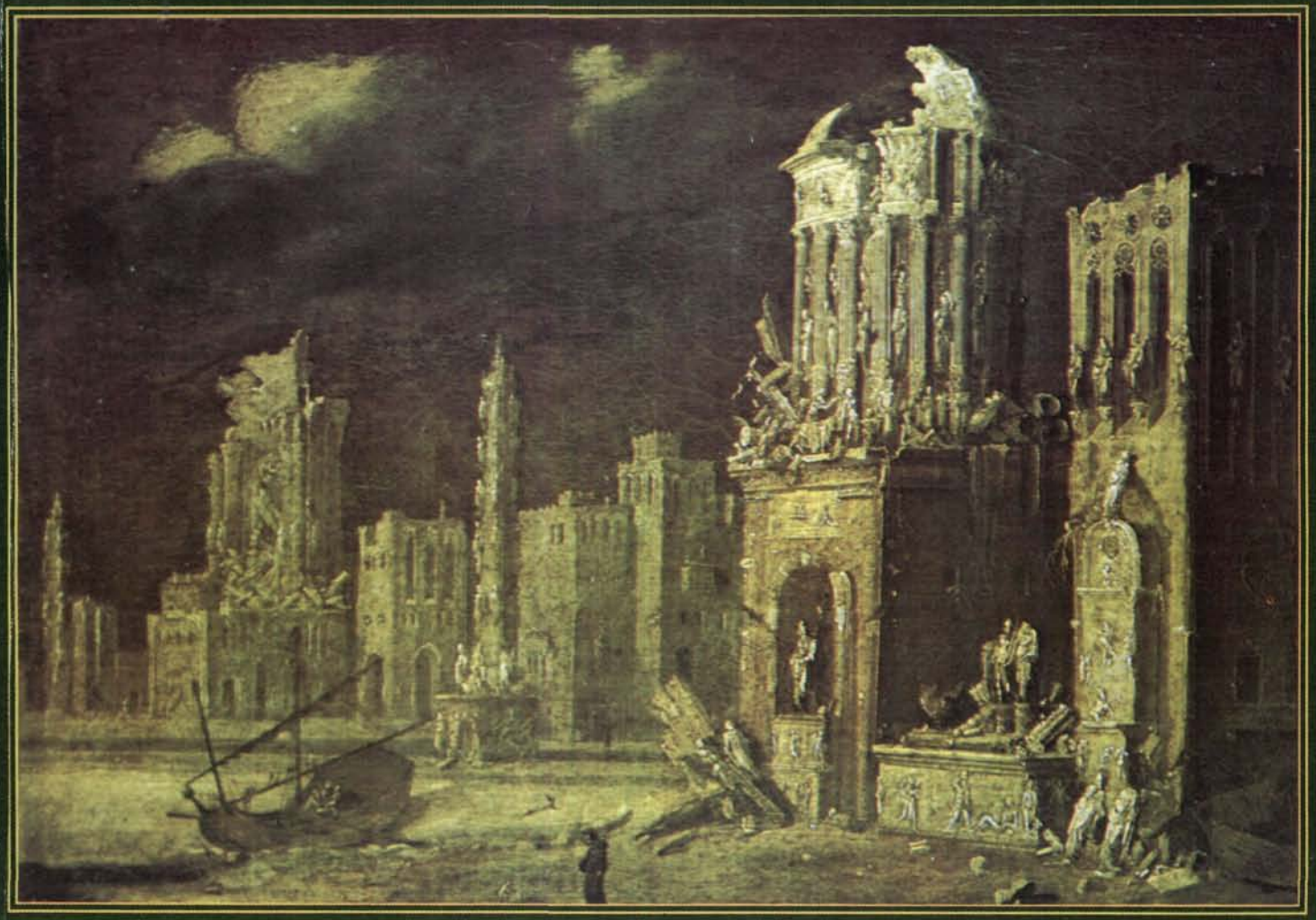
#14

THE NEW REPUBLIC

April 5, 1980 Price One Dollar

e Fall of the House of Credit



Robert Brustein on Louise Lasser • Judith Shklar on Isaiah Berlin

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Main intersection at a Hollywood oil field.

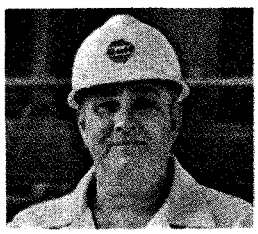
"This is the set where they shot 'Hello, Dolly!' What you can't see is us pumping oil behind it."

"One of the strangest places I ever produced oil," says Gulf Production Superintendent Eddie Culbertson, "was right here in Los Angeles, in the back lot of the 20th Century-Fox studio.

"They found an oil field right under a permanent set being used for shooting the movie 'Hello, Dolly!' in 1969.

The indirect approach

"How do you get at the oil without disturbing the set, the streets, or the buildings? With a technique called directional drilling. The oil is as far as one mile from the surface location of the drill sites, which were hidden by the scenery.



"We showed them how they could have their oil and their movies.'

"Directional drilling has other advantages. You can drill 20 or 30 wells from just one drill site. Or you can drill for some offshore oil without putting the drilling rig right in the water.

"Behind the scenery are 22 producing oil wells."

Keep America beautiful

"Sometimes it's a real challenge getting the oil without spoiling the landscape. Directional drilling is one way to do it.

"But there are other ways, and at Gulf we're using all of them—doing all we can to keep supplying energy for tomorrow."

Gulf

Gulf people: energy for tomorrow.

Gulf Oil Corporation.

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TRB

from Washington ®
April 5, 1980

Reagan's Folly

In a neatly stapled "Press Kit" for reporters, GOP national chairman Bill Brock, July 6, 1978, announced "the most complete agreement on an economic issue in modern Republican history." The agreement was for the proposed Kemp-Roth across-the-board income tax cut of 33 percent. Corporations would share the bonanza, too; big oil companies would get a flat three percent cut; itsy-bitsy companies would get a surtax exemption. The wonderful thing about this Republican vision was that it would pay for itself. It would be a free lunch. It would bring in so much additional income by stimulating the economy that in a short time—anywhere from one to five years—the Treasury would rake in more cash than the tax cost.

The list of prominent sponsors included "Gov. Ronald Reagan," described as two-term governor of California and principal on "his own show on 300 radio stations five days a week" and the author of "a weekly syndicated column that appears in more than 100 newspapers." Today the description doubtless would add that he is the first Grade B movie star ever to seek (and very likely to attain) the American presidency.

On ABC's "Issues and Answers," March 16, Reagan was asked if he still favored the ambitious plan that would cost the Treasury $16.1 billion the first year, $42.4 billion the second, and $77.5 billion the third—that's $160 billion altogether. "That's right!" he replied agreeably. He was asked how he expected to increase arms expenditures along with this, and also balance the budget. Wouldn't it be inflationary?

"Inflationary?—I don't believe so," he responded disarmingly. He explained that "some of the best" economists in the country agreed with him; also that President Kennedy had used the same device and it worked fine; he couldn't remember exactly how much Kennedy had cut.

The ABC news correspondents prompted him; they read his paid advertisement saying of Kennedy that "when his 30 percent Federal tax cut became law, the economy did so well that every group in the country came out ahead. If I become President, we're going to try that again." Had he meant "30 percent?" they asked; how familiar was he anyway with these television ads that he did?

Reagan assured them that he was certainly familiar with all the television commercials he broadcast; "sitting in front of the camera and doing these things and each one several times over I maybe just went by that without thinking the '30 percent' was familiar to me, but it's familiar as a part of the Kemp-Roth bill."

The Kemp-Roth bill is postulated on the so-called Laffer curve, an imaginary line created by Californian economist Arthur Laffer, which is supposed to show that taxes below a certain point of national product raise revenue, and above it, reduce it.

The trouble with Reagan economics is that when President Kennedy cut taxes $12 billion in 1964, despite an unbalanced budget, there was no inflation (as contrasted to a horrifying 18 percent today), and there was serious unemployment. The timing was right; it worked; it was engineered by Kennedy economist Walter Heller, and the nation snapped out of its slump. Conditions are utterly different today. One shouldn't lean too heavily on the Laffer curve. Representative Jack Kemp, Republican of New York, is ecstatic about it, however: "What Laffer has done for the Republican party," he told the GOP organ *First Monday* back in 1978, "is what Keynes did for the liberal Democrats in his *General Theory*. . . . Laffer, in his book, *The Way the World Works*, has shown historically and also intuitively that lower tax rates encourage production, lead to more revenue, and he gives us a rationale for lower tax rates."

It's nice to discover there's a Republican Santa Claus. Scoffing at the program, Heller called the attention of the *Wall Street Journal* to a comment by the conservatives' economic guru in *Newsweek*: "There's more than a reasonable possibility that I'm wrong," said Laffer. "But . . . why not try something new?" Why not, indeed? It could take the Republican party, President Reagan, and the nation over the cliff.

Conservative economist Herbert Stein thinks so, too: "It may turn out that such a tax cut would raise the revenue, just as it may turn out that there is human life on Mars," he says. "But I would not invest much in a McDonald's franchise on that planet."

There is no reason why an actor's stage shouldn't include the White House. The election process has become more and more a media event anyway. California's George Murphy was the first thespian to hit the Washington big time; after four Broadway shows and 45 movies he graduated to the US Senate, 1964-70. Now Reagan is working up to the star role. He is a fine performer, easy, relaxed, low-voiced, unflappable; but it turns out that he hasn't quite understood the lines. He makes everything simple. The economy? Balance the budget, slash expenditures, cut taxes. Energy? Leading oil producers have told him that only a third of the oil in US wells has been extracted; remove controls and we can be free of the Middle East.

"I get my figures from what I think are some of the finest oil geologists in the world," he says.

His former campaign manager John Sears tried to shield him from the public; Reagan made a series of gaffes: he proposed making Social Security voluntary, wanted to sell the Tennessee Valley Authority; called the 1964 Civil Rights Act a "mistake." He suggested transferring $90 billion in federal welfare programs back to the states.

Reagan delivers his big speeches from note cards and loses force when he reads from a text. He wows an audience of Lions by using one-liners interspersed with passages from "the" speech. His effect comes, I think, from the appearance of an honest, unassuming neighbor suddenly overcome, as you watch, with shock and disgust at the enormity of the sins going on around him. It would be so easy to correct them with a little common sense. His solutions may be (and probably are) wrong, but as you listen you generally like him, and always understand him.

As governor of California, he was what many wanted, with a current of anti-intellectualism. If he becomes president the men around him will be vital; businessmen told Harding what to think; Reagan, I imagine, will take advice, too. Guiding him should not be difficult in view of Reagan's character. Explore him and analyze him: way down deep he's shallow.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

April 5, 1980

Anti-Carter vs. Anti-Kennedy

The dilapidated castle you see on this issue's cover, illustrating William Quirk's discourse on the collapse of the credit markets (page 22), originally was intended to accompany an essay this week titled "Camelot in Ruins." That article has been held over. We wish we had done the same with another article a few months ago titled "It's Over for Jimmy" (*TNR*, August 4 & 11, 1979). It has not been a good year for political prognosticators. Yet nothing that has happened so far in the presidential campaign disproves the central message of these articles: that most Democratic voters are convinced, like us, that Edward Kennedy and Jimmy Carter are not entitled to their party's nomination for president in 1980. The dramatic shifts in voter sentiment can be seen as sequential acts of revulsion at whatever has seemed the most immediate prospect: four more years of Carter, or the coronation of the youngest Kennedy, or four more years of Carter.

Perhaps we are displaying the same moodiness, but at least at the moment we find the Carter prospect more revolting. It's not a matter of comparing the candidates' noises. Carter objectively has failed, in his first term, to maintain—let alone strengthen—this country's prosperity at home or its position in the world, standards by which any president must be assessed. He also has failed to achieve—or even seriously to pursue—any progress toward a more equitable society, the special standard by which Democrats should judge. To reward this total failure with renomination is to admit that America's economic, diplomatic, and moral decline is inevitable, or at least that the Democratic party has no solution. On the other hand, Kennedy offers little that appeals except that he is not a Republican and he is not Jimmy Carter. His campaign has not allayed skepticism about his character and his intelligence. His message has been a combination of empty generalities and conventional specifics that add up to an eagerness to tell people what they want to hear, when true leadership requires exactly the opposite.

We suspect many Democrats, maybe even most, have been thinking along just these lines. What can we all do? Here are the possibilities: support Kennedy as the lesser of two evils; somehow get ourselves another Democratic candidate; switch parties and support John Anderson; or look for a third-party candidate in the fall.

John Anderson has proposed several sound and creative ideas in his campaign. More impressive, he seems to be willing to grasp the nettle—a unique quality among the present candidates, and far more important than any particular promise a candidate might make. He has a record of progressive instincts that is at least equal to Carter's, if not to Kennedy's. But in many ways he is a very conventional Republican. Furthermore, there is a disturbing excess of piety about him; he has turned his courage into a sort of *shtick*, an empty routine, that makes us wonder how deep it runs. And of course he has virtually no chance of beating Reagan for the Republican nomination. In short, a good man, but not good enough to change parties for—yet.

The emergence of a broad-based third party is more an amusement for journalists than a serious possibility, especially so late in the game. It is hard to imagine such a party coalescing around the negative concept of dislike for everybody else, without even the benefits of the central charismatic personality or single dominating issue that have helped the failed third-party movements of the past.

The only real hope, however slim, is to create a new possibility within our own party. There are any number

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of prominent Democrats who, though not ideal, would be preferable to either Carter or Kennedy: Edmund Muskie, Morris Udall, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Hugh Carey, Walter Mondale, to name just a few. But at this point in the campaign, it is mathematically impossible for anyone to win nomination on the first ballot against Carter and Kennedy. If we are right, though, that most Democrats are dismayed at the present choice before them, there is this possibility: leaders of the constituent elements of the traditional Democratic majority—labor, ethnic groups, and so on—could gather and, in a spirit of emergency, produce a consensus ticket intended to appeal to as broad a spectrum of Democrats and independents as possible. Token efforts could be made to persuade Carter and Kennedy to withdraw, but the real hope would be a first-ballot deadlock that would release most of the convention delegates. The only way to achieve a deadlock would be to get people to vote for Jerry Brown. Brown would be a stand-in, in essence, for "None of the Above"—the clear favorite. It's quite unlikely, but we scan the distant horizon looking for signs. We think millions of other Democrats do likewise.

White House Watch

Holding On

On the verge of the announcements of cuts by the President and by congressional committees in the fiscal 1980 and 1981 budgets, the officials who administer the White House Office and the separate Executive Office of the President were confident that the reductions of their staffs wouldn't hurt them or anybody else. Jimmy Carter had gone through a grandiose display of reduction in both staffs in 1977, and any evidence that since then he had let them grow to totals that would justify significant new cuts would contribute to the spreading notion that he really isn't in charge of things including his own establishment. In fact the two presidential staffs have not grown inordinately. So it wasn't really surprising that Hugh Carter Jr., the Georgia cousin who is in administrative charge of the White House Office, the one that directly serves the President, and Richard Harden, the Georgian who as head of the Office of Administration more or less oversees the staffing of the larger Executive Office, seemed to be feeling pretty content at the end of March.

Hugh Carter, who was dubbed Cousin Cheap in 1977 by reporters when he went along with their calls for cutbacks in White House motorcars, TV sets, and the like, has been told by the Office of Management and Budget to reduce his budgetary 1981 estimate of WHO staff costs by between $250,000 and $260,000. Because OMB and the President had previously approved an increase of two million dollars (from $18.5 to $20.5 million) in the WHO estimate, Cousin Hugh expected to make the cut without drastic personnel reductions. As of March 26, nobody had said anything to him about cuts in the current election-year budget and staff. The big EOP increase in personnel and money was for staffing the Council on Wage and Price Stability, from 52 in 1979 to 156 in 1980 to 252 in 1981. Much of the increase is still occurring. Harden may logically figure that so long as inflation is said to be the number one enemy and COWPS its number one fighter, however ineffective it may be, the budget cutters can't do much to him.

The White House Office and its staffing history and problems mostly interest this reporter. An overlooked fact of the history is that until January 1979, when the President signed the White House Personnel Authorization Act of 1978, the President was authorized to hire and the Treasury was authorized to pay only 14 members of a WHO staff which had been reduced from 485 "permanent positions" in Gerald Ford's last months to 351 under Carter. These 14, essentially "the senior staff," were eligible for the maximum salaries payable to Executive Level 11 officials (then $54,000; now $60,662.50). The number 14 was the sole statutory limitation. The only other limitation was the amount Congress was willing to appropriate for White House pay. The chairman of a House appropriations subcommittee, Tom Steed of Oklahoma, was for years the real dictator of White House staff levels. Two members of Congress, Patricia Schroeder of Colorado and Herbert E. Harris of Virginia, disliked this non-system and eventually got Congress to pass the personnel authorization act. It's had unnoticed effects. Not all of them are displeasing to Carter, the first President who has been affected.

The act abolished the limitation of 14 and authorized the hiring and payment (subject to appropriation) of 25 WHO staffers at or up to the Level 11 scale; of another 25 at or up to Level 111 pay ($55,387), and 50 more at or up to GS-18 pay ($50,112). Carter ordered that his people at these levels be paid approximately $1500 less than the legal tops, resulting in actual pay ranging in these levels from $48,500 to $59,080. Twelve of the 25 authorized Level 11 spots, 22 of the 25 authorized Level 111s, and 27 of the 50 authorized GS-18s are filled. Hugh Carter suspects but hasn't taken the trouble to prove that the proportion of WHO employees at these or equivalent levels is lower than it was under Ford and Nixon.

Here is a caveat that must always figure in White House staff stories. It's true and not true that the White House Office staff is the one in the President's immediate service. The OMB, with 606 "permanents" the biggest part of the Executive Office, is also in his direct service. The Domestic Policy Council (54 permanents or their equivalent) and the National Security Council (72) are separate entities. Leaving aside OMB, they increase the number of the President's

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Correspondence

Pat goes first class

To the editors:

Concerning the Washington Diarist's comment on HEW Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris's trip to Egypt, Liberia, and Nigeria (*TNR*, March 15): there was solid justification, with strong State Department support, for the trip. Harris had been invited by Liberia and Nigeria to explore with their health ministries ways in which cooperative projects with the US could improve health in those countries and by Egypt to review extensive joint projects in health, rehabilitation, and social services.

Secretary Harris could have scheduled a direct, first-class flight from Lagos, Nigeria, to Cairo, but was advised against it by the US embassy in Lagos, which reported that the only available flight was undependable. Instead, she flew first-class to Rome, then tourist over to Cairo, taking advantage of a brief stopover in Rome to meet with the Italian minister of health. Had she taken the direct flight from Lagos to Cairo, she would have been delayed two days because the flight was canceled at the last minute.

Bill M. Wise
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Washington, DC

Don't rock the Iranian boat

To the editors:

I read your editorial in the March 8 issue, "A Tin Medal for Diplomacy," with horror. I will give few accolades to Jimmy Carter except when he has been cautious enough to keep his mouth shut!

You show absolutely no understanding of the precarious political situation in Iran since Bani-Sadr was elected as head of government. He is between the devil and a hot place in the persons of the Ayatollah Khomeini and the Revolutionary Council and the radical, mentally and emotionally mixed-up characters surrounding and holding our embassy personnel.

There really is no government in Iran strong enough to negotiate *anything*. Until Bani-Sadr can consolidate his power and really wield the power necessary to get his country moving again, the US or the UN will not be able to negotiate with him a way of getting our Americans out and home again. Let us be wise and not rock the boat any more than we already have. We should not impose any embargo on Iran. We should do our best to let Bani-Sadr consolidate his power as best he can. That is our only hope and our best hope. We should do nothing to put the people of Iran on the defensive to any degree whatsoever.

Helena J. Strickley
Tustin, California

Post hoc pol knock

To the editors:

With your editorial ("Bring Back the Pols," *TNR*, March 22) *TNR* advocates a return to the old republic, to the old method of selecting presidential nominees. This is a case of your hostility to Carter affecting your powers of analysis and your memory. I thought that a plurality of Democrats voted for McGovern in those 1972 primaries because the war was an issue. In 1976 Carter may have attracted Democrats because he was the moderate in the field or because voting for him was an act of purging the body politic of its Nixonian humor. Blaming the primaries for the nomination of candidates who can't make *TNR*'s list of figures who could revive the tradition of political excellence (Gerald Ford?) shows a lack of faith in the democratic process. Besides it is a *post hoc* fallacy. Remember that voters no more use reason and memory than do editors.

Milton McDonald
Fayetteville, North Carolina

To the editors:

Your editorial "Bring Back the Pols" is the best I have read in *The New Republic* in 25 years.

The saddest development in modern American politics is the decline of the political parties. At last, a serious journal of politics, and one in the forefront of the "new politics" party reform, has expressed its misgivings with what all those good intentions have in fact created.

You will receive letters to the effect that the 1980 choice between President Carter and Governor Reagan is only the logical result of that "openness" and "true representation" of "the people" that your journal strongly urged on the nation in years past. Frankly, I think you have earned such a response. However, you also have earned the gratitude of serious citizens who seek out not only physicians who are professionals and lawyers who are professionals, but—yes—politicians who are professionals.

Donald T. Wolfe
Loyola College
Baltimore, Maryland

Green v. TRB

To the editors:

"The Supreme Legislature," TRB's March 15 column, commented on the policy-making role of the Supreme Court. At the beginning of his observations, TRB took Ronald Reagan to task for his misstatement that the court had ruled on federal funds for medicaid abortions. Later in his column, TRB observed that the "Warren Court, dominated by Roosevelt appointees, declared the constitutional rights of citizens to equality in many fields such as voting and birth control."

The Roosevelt appointees composed a five-member majority only during the term of the Warren Court when *Brown* v. *Board I* was decided. Robert Jackson died in late 1954. The plurality of Roosevelt appointees was eroded with the retirement of Stanley F. Reed in 1957 and disappeared with the retirement of Felix Frankfurter in 1962. Only two Roosevelt appointees served throughout the Warren Court years: Hugo Black and William O. Douglas. Furthermore, these Roosevelt appointees were not necessarily committed to equality in voting and birth control. Frankfurter dissented in *Baker* v. *Carr* and Black dissented in *Griswold* v. *Connecticut*.

TRB should be more careful in his observations and in his choice of examples.

William C. Green
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky

Crime and punishment

To the editors:

Assuming that sensible people are given prison sentences, I do not believe that I would choose having my hand chopped off rather than serving a few years behind bars, as Stephen Chapman suggests in "The Prisoner's Dilemma," *TNR*, March 8. Concerning being incarcerated, what better way for an enterprising young sociologist to get some good, raw data? With my cultured manner, I probably would be placed in an institution that was more like a resort, anyway. Shucks.

Les James
San Francisco, California

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White House people from his vaunted 351 to 477. With other adjustments of this kind, the Carter, Ford, and Nixon totals are not very different.

And there's the matter of detailees, federal employees high and low who are loaned to the White House and paid by their parent agencies for up to six months. The NSC excepted, few overstay the six months. NSC pays its detailees when they stay past one month. Only purists who are purer than I am (and I'm surrounded by 'em) are outraged by the increased use of detailees in such times of pressure as pre-election and election years. It did seem a bit much when Walter Shapiro of the *Washington Post* discovered that some detailees had reported to the White House without ever working at their parent and paying agencies. The fact remains, though, that Jimmy Carter from 1977 into 1979 made it unpleasant and difficult for his senior assistants to augment their regular staffs with detailees or by any other means. Rosalynn Carter complained in 1978 that she couldn't budge her Jimmy on that issue. She was outraged by the modest staff reductions he forced upon her in 1977 and made her live with through 1978. The truth is that White House assistants in the top pay levels (Hamilton Jordan, Anne Wexler, Sarah Weddington, Jack Watson, Frank Moore, Jody Powell among them) are active in the President's campaign for nomination and reelection. They try to keep their overt campaign doings as far as anyone could from their official duties. Even so, the demand upon them for information, advice, help of kinds that citizens seek at all times increases enormously in a campaign season. They need more help and get it however they can. Carter finally began to relent last fall. Five White House units reported a total of 44 detailees last September 30. The White House Office alone had 70 by January 31, 77 on February 29.

Consultants paid by the day are also around. On September 30, the end of fiscal 1979, the White House Office reported under the new personnel law that it had hired six consultants for a total of 193 days, at approximately $170 per day. The Domestic Policy Staff reported three at about $94 per day. The pay of 10 others in various offices ranged between the foregoing extremes. Consultants for the campaign are or surely should be working for the Carter-Mondale committee.

Another side of presidential support is getting attention in the Senate and some public attention. Senators Lawton Chiles of Florida and David Pryor of Arkansas, chairmen of concerned subcommittees, have introduced a bill that would cover presidential libraries, Secret Service protection, widows' pensions, and the office and staff allowances granted ex-Presidents since Harry Truman complained to the late Speaker Sam Rayburn that he, Truman, needed and deserved help. The library housing Jimmy Carter's first-term papers would be the last individual ex-president's library. Carter's people, naturally assuming that he'll have a second term, don't like this. The proposal is to consolidate future libraries in a single institution near Washington. According to Chiles and Pryor, the cost of supporting individual libraries has risen from $63,745 in 1955 to $9.5 million in fiscal 1980. The cost of Secret Service protection for ex-Presidents and their families has risen from $49,507 in 1963 to $7.9 million in 1980. The bill would limit protection of an ex-President to his first eight years out of office and protection of his family to that associated with his protection.

Office and staff allowances most exercise citizens who write to the senators. The bill would put a cap of $300,000 per year on these allowances for the first four years out of office, $250,000 a year for the second four years, and $200,000 per year thereafter. The bill also would restrict use of the federal money to ex-presidential activities and debar federal support of "income generating activities" such as paid lectures or books written and published for gain. Presidential memoirs researched and written with federal support would have to be published by the government.

Ex-Presidents are pensioned at $66,000 per year, widows at $20,000. The bill would increase widows' pensions to two-thirds of an ex-President's pension. The bill doesn't mention widowers of Presidents.

Hearings last November listed total payments to Gerald Ford and Richard Nixon only in calendar 1978. Excepting pensions, the payments for office, staff, travel, and similar expenses totaled $359,990 for Ford; $229,864 for Nixon. They have not responded to requests for comment on the Chiles-Pryor bill.

John Osborne

Politics

Ronnie's for Real

Democrats have stopped chuckling at the prospect that Ronald Reagan will be the Republican presidential nominee. They ought to start quaking. Reagan looks formidable; he will almost certainly be nominated, last week's Bush victory in Connecticut notwithstanding. In 1976 Reagan came within 117 delegates of nomination against President Ford while capturing only 23 delegates in New England and 36 in the Mid-Atlantic states, including New York. This year, Reagan already has won 40 delegates in New England, including 14 in Connecticut, where he won none in 1976. And Reagan has at least 75 New York delegates, compared to only 20 in 1976. Meanwhile, he has exceeded his 1976 performance in the South and Midwest, and there is every prospect he will repeat the performance in the West.

If Reagan is nominated, he has a good chance of being elected, in spite of what Gerald Ford and John Anderson say. The latest Gallup poll shows Reagan running just a point behind President Carter, who is still the likely

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Democratic nominee. With public support for Carter draining away fast—but probably not fast enough to nominate Kennedy—new polls probably will begin showing Reagan with a lead. Reagan's chances of beating Carter look even better when one adds up electoral votes. Assuming that Reagan carries California and Oregon, his western base should give him 125 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the election. If Reagan can steal the South from Carter, except for Georgia, he would win another 135 votes—just 10 short of victory. Reagan would have to carry only one northern or eastern state to go over the top. In 1976, Gerald Ford carried Indiana, Illinois, New Jersey, and Michigan, and Ronald Reagan could do the same, given his appeal to blue-collar voters. If Edward Kennedy should snatch the Democratic nomination away from Carter, Reagan's chances in the North and East would be diminished, but his hold on the South and West would be all the stronger.

Probably the most important decision Ronald Reagan has to make this year is the choice of a running mate. Actuarially speaking, Reagan's vice president would have a greater chance of becoming president than most occupants of the No. 2 job. Reagan would be 74 when his first term ends and unlikely to seek a second. His vice president presumably would have an advantage in the race to succeed him. This year, if Reagan can pick a running mate who will both maintain unity in the Republican party and enhance Reagan's image among Democrats and independents, he ought to be the going-away favorite to win the 1980 election. Reagan himself has listed three criteria for selecting the vice-presidential candidate: he must be younger than Reagan, which is easy; he must be "philosophically compatible" with Reagan, which is more problematical; and he must be willing to carry on Reagan's policies in the event Reagan dies.

After John Anderson, whom Reagan has disqualified for reasons of political and philosophical incompatibility, the odds-on Washington favorite for Reagan's No. 2 man is Howard Baker, who also has the support of some Reagan intimates. However, there are other members of the Reagan inner circle who think Baker is not conservative enough or dependable enough. They point to his support for the Panama Canal treaties as evidence of one vital difference with Reagan and raise questions whether Baker, if he ever became president, might not pursue his own political agenda rather than fulfill the Reagan mandate. The true-blue conservatives in the anti-Baker camp prefer Jack Kemp or Phil Crane. Some pragmatists like George Bush, who they believe would loyally serve Reagan and his principles, would give a moderate tinge to the GOP ticket and bring along an impressive array of political and foreign policy advisers. Besides Baker, Kemp, and Bush, such other personalities as Richard Lugar of Indiana, former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and Governor Richard Thornburgh of Pennsylvania also figure in the V.P. guessing game.

Ronald Reagan is a threat in November not only because Carter is weak (and Kennedy might be weaker), but because he seems to have shed his old right-wing extremist image for that of a sweet old dependable granddaddy who had it right about the Russians and inflation long before ordinary people were paying attention. Reagan apparently will not make the mistakes that Barry Goldwater made in 1964: hardening his views once the nomination is in hand and using his position to punish and exclude Republicans who disagree with him.

While sticking to his conservative principles, Reagan is doing his best to soften their impact and bring a message of hope rather than defiance. At the same time, Reagan is expanding his network of advisers beyond a tight core of right-wingers to include experienced, often learned heavyweights—albeit, of strictly conservative stripe. By election day Reagan is likely to have a plausible, not-at-all scary position on most every issue, and a set of advisers who will convey confidence that Reagan can run the government competently and responsibly.

In foreign policy, for example, Reagan's innermost group of advisers tends to be rigidly hardline—though certainly not of the kooky-right fringe. Their most common single characteristic (besides suspicion of the Soviet Union) is a record of opposition to the policies of Henry Kissinger. Reagan's chief issues coordinator on foreign policy is Richard V. Allen, who performed the same function for Richard Nixon in the 1968 campaign, then joined Nixon's administration as Kissinger's deputy at the National Security Council. Apparently fearful of Allen's independent access to Nixon, Kissinger froze Allen out of policy action at the White House, and Allen quit, though he later came back as a Nixon adviser on international economic policy.

Some of Reagan's other key foreign policy briefers: Fred Ikle, who argued against Kissinger's SALT II proposals from his post as President Ford's arms control director; retired lieutenant general Daniel O. Graham, who fought against Kissinger's detente policies as head of the Defense Intelligence Agency; William Van Cleve, who was special assistant to Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, Kissinger's bureaucratic arch-rival in the Nixon days; and Joseph Churba, a former Air Force intelligence analyst and critic of Kissinger's treatment of Israel during the 1973 Middle East war.

During the Republican debate in Illinois, Reagan and all other Republican candidates virtually ruled out Kissinger as secretary of state in any of their administrations. Kissinger did himself no good, either, by urging former President Ford to get into the presidential race. It should be interesting to see whether Reagan is flexible enough, despite his own record of hostility toward Kissinger, to tap the former secretary's creative strategic mind.

Those who know Allen and Reagan well claim that,

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Kissinger aside, they are not Goldwater-style exclusivists, and will try to assemble task forces representing a range of moderate-to-conservative opinion on foreign policy issues. Right-wing Democrats are likely to be included, and the opportunity will be available for persons to serve without necessarily endorsing Reagan's candidacy.

Besides issues task forces consisting of academics and other experts, Reagan is expected to name clusters of spokesmen on various issues, from whom the Reagan cabinet might later be drawn. Some of those talked about in the Reagan camp as potential secretaries of state are Baker, Bush, John Connally, Alexander Haig, Rumsfeld, former treasury secretary William Simon, and William Casey, the former Export-Import Bank chairman who now is serving as Reagan's campaign manager. Casey probably will be a candidate for treasury secretary also. Ikle might be considered with others for secretary of defense. Graham, although some consider him too incendiary for the job, is a potential CIA director. Some of Reagan's advisers do not rule out the possibility that a Democrat might be asked to take one of the top foreign policy jobs—possibly Henry Jackson, who declined a Nixon offer to become secretary of defense, or Eugene Rostow, a former under secretary of state.

Reagan apparently intends to sound more "presidential" now that he is far ahead in the GOP race. One sign was a speech at the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, where he placed military spending third in his order of priorities for restoring the US to a position of world strength. The first two goals were "a clear vision of, and belief in, America's future" and "a strong economy, based on the free market system."

Reagan's priority list seems sensible, and his repeated emphasis on policies of strength may seem to many to offer a better alternative than the uncertainty and vacillation of the Carter administration. However, there is reason to doubt whether Reagan's policies will actually be as moderate as his latest speeches suggest on the surface. For example, though military spending is third in order of priority and though Reagan does not advocate military "superiority," he seems to favor huge defense budget increases. Reagan declines to say exactly how much Pentagon spending should increase, but in Chicago he implied that the US should match the Soviets in strategic and conventional spending—which Pentagon officials say would add another $38 billion per year to the budget. Meanwhile, Reagan is advocating deep tax cuts to spur productivity and fight inflation. It is hard to see how the two agendas balance.

Reagan also said in Chicago that he does not rule out arms control pacts with the Soviet Union, but in a 1978 speech in Los Angeles, Reagan said public support for arms pacts represents "national self-hatred, stemming from the Vietnam War." In another 1978 speech, at an Israel Bond dinner in Chicago, he said, "The Soviet Union cannot possibly match us in an arms race. We only have to make them understand that our people will, as a young President said we would a few years ago, 'bear any burden, pay any price. . . .'"

The principal worry I have about Reagan is that he really believes the following, from the same speech: "There is an evil influence throughout the world. In every one of the far-flung trouble spots, dig deep enough and you'll find the Soviet Union stirring a witches' brew, furthering its own imperialistic ambitions. If the Soviet Union would simply go home, much of the bloodshed in the world today would cease." If that means what it seems to mean, then Reagan will see the Soviet menace in every challenge to US interests, anywhere in the world. Are we to understand that any black leader in Africa, any revolutionary in Latin America, any Moslem or Marxist in Asia who opposes US policy will be treated as an enemy? And how will he fight them? With CIA covert action? With US Marines?

Reagan believes in restoring America's credibility as an ally, in building up US military strength, and in resisting Soviet expansion. All that is fine. The question, though, is whether he will be prudent in choosing allies and committing US prestige. In the Middle East, for example, Reagan is a solid supporter of Israel, but he goes overboard, mouthing extreme Likud justifications for Israeli annexation of the West Bank. Elsewhere in the world, Reagan seems to believe—judging by past radio scripts and speeches—other American friends and allies include (or should have included) the shah of Iran, Chile's Pinochet, Somoza in Nicaragua, President Marcos in the Philippines, and the police state in Argentina. If Reagan means to defend every doomed dictator in the world just because he is anti-communist, that will be no improvement on President Carter's policies, and will do even less to inspire the world's confidence in American leadership.

Morton Kondracke

Retreats, abandonments, and repudiations.

Mr. Ball's World

For a banker active at his trade, George W. Ball is a writer prolific in the extreme: one reads him in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, in *Life* as in *Newsweek*, in *Harper's* and *Foreign Affairs*, and elsewhere. And for a man who writes so much, he writes not badly at all on many matters; but the chief subject of his writing is the Middle East and its travails—a subject on which Ball has strong views. In brief, Ball asserts that the Arab-Israeli conflict is central to all Middle Eastern issues, whether the high price and unreliable supply of oil, political instability in the Gulf and beyond, the need to respond to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and every

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variant of the above. Ball then goes on to argue that the central issue of the conflict is the Palestinian question and the American refusal to deal with the PLO. By now one is accustomed to find that George Ball will conclude his analysis of any Middle Eastern subject with a peroration on the need to negotiate with the PLO. In his view, that simple diplomatic procedure would suffice to solve our oil problem, would secure the amity of the entire Islamic world, and would foil the Russians too.

Those still inhibited by such petty things as the integrity of international agreements may protest that if the United States were to negotiate with the PLO it would be violating the 1975 Sinai II agreement with Israel. At that time, the United States declared that it would not negotiate with the PLO until and unless that body would accept the various UN resolutions that affirm Israel's right to exist. Others may transcend the legalities, and simply note that the already eroded credibility of the United States would suffer badly if it were to repudiate its own five-year-old undertakings, deal with an entity that continuously restates its goal as the destruction of an American ally, and humble itself before terrorists who lately have figured prominently on the scene of the anti-American jamborees of Tehran, and whose officials have publicly applauded the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. And then there is the little matter of the PLO's relations with the Soviet Union, which goes far beyond mere diplomatic alliance; there is abundant evidence that elements within the PLO actually have become the eyes and ears of the KGB. For such reasons, even those wholly lacking in sympathy for current Israeli policies find Ball's plan entirely unacceptable for the further damage it would do to American authority in the area. A great power in the habit of disposing of its allies as soon as the connection becomes inconvenient can inspire neither trust nor respect.

These objections, however, do not expose the central defect of Ball's argument. In Mr. Ball's world, Arabs and Moslems in general stand ready and willing to cooperate with the United States for mutual advantage—an advantage now prevented only by the persistence of American support for Israel. That is why the Saudis, Kuwaitis, et al. are not cooperating by producing enough oil to depress OPEC's extortionate prices; and that is why we see no great Islamic alliance emerging to confront the imminent threat of the Soviet Union. Obviously Ball's Arabs and Moslems at large are very special beings indeed, utterly disinterested in their own affairs and wholly preoccupied by their anguish for the Palestinian refugees.

Somehow this is not a reality easily recognized by recent visitors to the area. One sees instead countries and regimes in a state of extreme insecurity, threatened from without by the Soviet Union, its proxies and agents, and threatened from within by assorted radicals of left and right—often armed and trained by the PLO, itself armed and trained in part by the Soviet Union. What the Saudis et al. need is what they lack: a protector. If the United States acted seriously to defend its own interests, to support its friends and beat down its enemies—if the United States were, that is, still in the business of being a great power, all might be very different. Then Saudi princes might come to Washington as friends to ask what they could do for us in the matter of oil production and OPEC, or in the matter of chipping in to help the Afghan rebels, instead of sitting back to deny our own requests. Protected on all sides by the United States, given AID-CIA police support at home, a US naval presence in the Indian Ocean with some ground and tactical air units at bases in between, the rulers of the Gulf states might then reciprocate at full value. They might still ask us to do something for the Palestinians, just as we might ask them to stop stoning good-time girls in public, but there would be no hint of blackmail in the matter.

As it is, our credibility in the region as protectors has not recovered from the gory abandonment of Indochina and, paradoxically, would collapse if we abandoned Israel—much as Israel may be disliked. Any protection we might offer against internal upheavals is simply absent—and of course it is the internal threats that now are the most immediate. The Saudis, therefore, are being perfectly rational: since we refuse to help them against their enemies, they want at least our assistance in appeasing some of them, to wit the PLO and its radical allies. Who knows? If they could claim that they had blackmailed the United States into negotiating with the PLO, they might delay the evil day when mobs will come into the palaces to tear them to pieces by a year or even two; everything counts in a struggle for survival. In the meantime, seeing the United States unwilling to raise a finger to protect the shah (always till then the *numero uno* of the Americans in the area), witnessing all the elaborations of American impotence in the Tehran affair and the refusal of the United States to move to punish such infractions, the Saudis and the rest refuse our request for bases, reject our increasingly humble pleadings on oil, and sing the Palestinian tune—in the hope that it might serve to assuage some of the hostility of some of their enemies for a while. Obviously such a country is no fit partner for rulers of insecure lands in these most insecure times.

Thus George Ball's insistent promotions are no more than poor and narrow substitutes for a rehabilitation of American power and the reaffirmation of our authority. Those who still believe that the experiment of a fully demilitarized foreign policy should continue, those who applaud President Carter's historic originality in having invented the concept of a great power that will neither threaten its enemies nor reassure its friends, must logically support Ball's suggestion. After all, repudiating Sinai II to recognize the PLO is merely one of many retreats, abandonments, and repudiations that must follow once Kissingerian policies are replaced by

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celebrations of our incapacity to act whenever conflict is at hand. One notes that Ball protests our minuscule and belated aid to Hassan's Morocco, and we must now expect protests whenever we react to conflict by helping our friends, instead of cutting a quick deal with their enemies. (On the subject of the disposition of the shah's person Ball has been downright ill-tempered; and yet Ball the distinguished diplomat should know that a diplomacy that defers to exotic mobs loses all value; and Ball the Middle Eastern expert should know that the refusal of personal hospitality offends the deepest cultural values of those he is so eager to please.)

George Ball's position is driven by the futile intent to preserve interests now very much at risk, while refusing to protect them by the only means now relevant: a plausible willingness to use force. Once this is grasped, his categorical denial that the Israeli connection is of strategic value to the United States makes perfect sense. ("There is no possibility whatever of Israel playing any useful part in the direct military or strategic sense.") If the United States itself abjures the uses of force, it obviously has no need of its own armed strength, let alone that of any allies. If there is a Mediterranean balance it is because of the Sixth Fleet; the reason that fleet can operate with any safety in the Levant is because of Israel's active control of the air as far out as Crete—which happens to be the main anchorage of the Soviet Mediterranean *Eskadra*. As for all the rest, the implicit availability of Israeli transit bases and recovery points, back-up facilities of all kinds (repair, medical, etc.), and readily available stocks of compatible weapons and ammunition as well as emergency air support would provide insurance for any US military operation in the region of the Gulf. Of course, Egyptian help would be very useful also, but only as a supplement until Egypt develops compatible facilities and long-range, high-performance air power.

George Ball and his supporters are of late much exercised by Jews and their loud voice in the chorus of American foreign policy. He tells us continuously that we should defer to Arab princes rather than Jewish voters. But Jews should not be unduly exercised since the chief target of Ball's supporters is the much larger group of Americans who affirm the urgent need to re-rehabilitate American military power and reaffirm American authority. (It is the fate of Ball to be celebrated by the disarmers—of whom he is not one.) With the restoration of American power, we would hear no more of oil blackmail. Those who can give can take away; those who can protect the oil can also seize it. Thus the ultimate issue of statecraft on the Palestinians remains a matter of only theoretical interest: how can a Palestinian state be built between the kingdom of Jordan and the state of Israel without automatically creating a Soviet ally in the process? After all, even the most moderate and pro-Western of governments of necessity would have to turn to a supporting outside power to maintain the country's independence between a strong Jordan and a much stronger Israel. And not even George Ball can seriously claim that the leaders of the PLO are more pro-Western or more moderate than their closest friend, the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Edward N. Luttwak

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The conciliator must now lead.

Mugabe's Burden

Nothing has illustrated better the folly of white Rhodesia than the frantic absurdity with which the professed Marxist Robert Mugabe was hailed overnight by "honky" as the big white hope. Victims of their own puerile but all-pervading propaganda machine, most whites believed that Bishop Abel Muzorewa would win the election handsomely. When he was obliterated, there was the usual white talk, a strange mixture of machismo and self-pity, of "gapping it to Beit Bridge," where the great, green, greasy Limpopo River marks the outer rim of the last white laager, South Africa. But once Mugabe appeared on television, all honeyed reason and reassurances of "whitey we need you, even if we haven't always loved you," lifelong disciples of good ole Smithy suddenly discovered that Mugabe may not be too bad after all.

The British gubernatorial staff have heaved an almighty sigh of relief too. No chance now of mathematical contortions to blot out Mugabe; no risk of the fury of the UN and the OAU. Highly informed British sources had assured me that a coalition led by Joshua Nkomo was very much in the cards—even if Mugabe had led the popular vote without securing the 50 out of 80 black seats necessary to ensure unfettered parliamentary power. Big Josh would have asked Mugabe to join the government as an underling with the proviso that, if he proved unwilling to play second fiddle, he would be altogether excluded from the broad coalition Nkomo had cobbled together against him. The war would have been unleashed again, but—if Mugabe's host country Mozambique had wavered—Nkomo might have won after a horrifyingly savage year. It is slightly more likely, however, that Ian Smith would have tried once more to divide and rule, and the war would have dragged on until the final destruction of Nkomo (forget the bishop), the whites, and the remains of Britain's reputation in Africa.

But there was no stopping Mugabe. And the British, understandably sheepish about the manner in which they were fooled by the old Rhodesian administration, have mended fences with mesmerizing rapidity. Mugabe already has proved astonishingly quick to

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dilute his revolutionary zeal. "Auntie BBC" is assisting Mugabe's revolutionary pamphleteers, and British barrack-square sergeants have flown in to drill the battle-hardened guerrillas, some of whom have confessed a desire to enroll at Sandhurst. At majestic Government House, Lord Soames now is merrily hobnobbing with the ascetic, lean Mugabe. Among the British staff, "Mugger Bugger" has been toned down to the jocularly respectful "Mugs." Soames has been relieved by Mugabe's huge winning figures of making any awkward decisions, and the British—by the criteria of the UN—have gotten off scot free. To the third world lobby, it is almost irritating.

The overwhelming benefit of Mugabe's landslide (and the overriding reason why the blacks voted for him) is that the war has stopped dead. To drive through the tribal trust lands (the reserves) is to visit another world. To destroy the fabric of Smith's Rhodesia, the guerrillas attacked anything that resembled order or authority, even if it was designed for the people's good. The destruction of veterinary services has killed a million African-owned cattle. Many rural clinics were closed, many of them vandalized. Almost all rural churches were closed down. Villagers sometimes were forced to destroy them. With all real "sellouts" long since killed off, prominent villagers were chosen increasingly at random for execution, to "encourage the others." For its part, the white-led army became increasingly vicious in reprisal, burning crops and granaries, shooting more villagers in "crossfire," while young white troopers talked wearily of "culling floppies" (shooting blacks) and "slotting nannies" (shooting black women). A terrible war has ended, and the people's relief is so great you can almost touch it.

Mugabe's success, however temporary, in soothing the whites has come as almost as much a shock as his victory itself, so that there is an added air of unreality. White society is bemused by the fact that it has not yet collapsed. The white motto now is "wait and see." Yet drastic social change is bound to arrive soon, and will grab the whites by the throat. Hospitals, for instance, shortly will become racially far more mixed, because health insurance schemes which enabled most whites (and some blacks) to go to expensive and thus de facto segregated clinics will diminish fast. Different types of government schools, where places currently are determined by ability to pay fees (and therefore also largely by race), soon will merge into an integrated mix, which rich white liberals will avoid by sending their children to schools abroad. But the bulk of whites will have to send their progeny to school alongside their illiterate cooks' children, who speak no English at home.

The whites will not like it, however mellow Mugabe remains. That is not to say they will be officially discriminated against. But their culture will be eroded. Zimbabwe will not become a multiracial society. The cultural/social gap between the races, legally enforced under Smith, will perpetuate itself whatever the law. Mugabe will pay homage to multiracialism because he badly needs to avoid the kind of chaos caused by the panicky white exodus that ruined Mozambique's economy next door.

The guerrillas did not fight for a multiracial state of equals, but for one where blacks would take charge and where whites, if they keep their heads down and their mouths shut, would be moderately welcome as a short-term economic necessity. The trappings of Western political tradition, whose substance already had been betrayed by Smith, will be fast discarded. The rights of the individual—black and white—gradually will be ignored for the common good, as demanded by the traditions of a society where consensus and cooperation are admired, and the concept of loyal opposition considered crazy. The press, cowardly and conformist under Smith, will slowly be geared to "educating the people." If Nkomo's party can be absorbed—and that would be facilitated if its leader were removed—a Zimbabwean one-party state will soon emerge.

The line-up of new political figures already looks wondrously bizarre to the stupefied whites. Fighting his way back after 15 years in Smith's prisons and brimming with such bloodcurdling rhetoric that Governor Soames had to ban him from electioneering, Enos Nkala has become finance minister, to the dismay of not a few blacks. The presidential nomination of the Reverend Canaan Banana, say the whites, now makes them citizens of Africa's first official banana republic. (In the Zimbabwean political tradition, Banana has switched allegiances. In Geneva 1976, he arrived with the bishop and left with Mugabe. "Banana splits," the wags reported. "Bishop slips up."

More compelling still is the rise of the new minister for sport, youth, and recreation: a female guerrilla fighter, a squat 25-year-old with almost no formal education, who happens to be married to Mugabe's guerrilla commander, and who has decided to retain her *chimurenga* name—the nom-de-guerre Teurai Ropa, which means "Spill Blood." (At first she appeared willing to allow the whites to indulge in their favorite tribal ritual—rugby matches with South Africa—but party bureaucrats soon slapped her down by denouncing all official sporting contact with the Boers.)

It is the style as much as the substance of the changes that will undermine the whites. To be sure, blacks will enjoy pay rises, quicker promotion, the benefits of the lifting of economic sanctions, and the massive international aid that soon will come flooding in. But above all they soon will realize that they are part of the new dominant culture. Ms. Spill Blood, not the white-gloved, tightly-smiling Ms. Smith, is on the front page.

The less glamorous aspects of the transition, however, are also in evidence. The deep-rooted conspiratorial, authoritarian traditions of the winning party, the accusations of nepotism and bribery, the impossibility of pinning party officials down for an appointment, the bravado and bullying rhetoric of some of Mugabe's lieutenants, soon will impinge on the

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new Zimbabwe. "The two key party factions," a veteran black nationalist told me, only half in jest, "are the heavy drinkers on the one hand, and the alcoholics on the other."

All this has very little bearing on ideology, and much more to do with old ethnic factionalism. Above all it is a matter of temperament and personality. This has gratified many whites, for the ruling party's Marxism is looking thinner by the day, as some of Salisbury's best-known Uncle Toms, fat black company directors, entrepreneurial doctors, out and out capitalists, have slipped neatly into seats in the assembly and Senate on Mugabe's ticket. The clearest indication of ideology's secondary status was the eventual realignment of the 74 leading detainees who had been locked up by Mugabe in Mozambique during the war for trying to take over the party from the left. One group of rebels was professedly Maoist, the other hardline Soviet and keen on guerrilla unity under Russian guidance. On their return to Zimbabwe in time for the election, the Maoists mostly joined Tiny Rowland's friend Nkomo; the pro-Russians went over to the reactionary maverick Ndabaningi Sithole; while the heaviest revolutionaries actually teamed up with the South African-backed Bishop Muzorewa.

Mugabe himself probably is one of the few genuine ideologues in Zimbabwean politics. There is no reason to doubt his oft-stated earlier protestations of Marxism, though Lord Soames may now think he can convert him. But Mugabe is clever, cautious, and undoubtedly determined to temper his doctrine with a pragmatic acceptance of the mixed economy, simply to retain white skills until they no longer are needed. There is little question of his real dislike of the Soviet Union. If there is a romantic attachment to any model, it is elsewhere. One of Mugabe's confidants tells me the new leader's ideas now fall "halfway between Swedish social democracy and Tito's Yugoslavia."

Threats to the peace (and to Mugabe) still exist. White colonels have not yet thrown away ideas for a coup, even though the backing of Pretoria would be essential and does not appear to be forthcoming. White soldiers are just as demoralized as the black rural folk (and indeed the guerrillas themselves) by the prospect of more war. But there are angry units that still could be incited to fight again. After all, in conventional military terms it is true that Smith's soldiers never lost a battle. Some are maddened by the reality that they certainly have lost the peace.

Nkomo's party also remains a potential danger to Mugabe, even though it officially has been absorbed into the coalition government. Nkomo himself is bitter and despondent, especially because of his utter rejection at the hands of the Shona voters, who made up three-quarters of those who voted. They gave him a derisive four percent of the vote, half as much even as the bishop won from them. Though Nkomo's base lay among the minority Ndebele and related Kalanga tribes, he had maintained an impeccably non-tribal leadership: eight of his top 10 men were Shona, yet in the country's largest constituency centered in Salisbury, not one of them was elected. That was a humiliating blow to Nkomo's claims of national leadership. Then Mugabe's men drove a hard bargain over the coalition: some wanted to exclude Nkomo altogether. In the end, only six out of 36 ministers and deputy ministers are Nkomo men, and only one out of 14 senators elected by the assembly. As home minister, Nkomo is resentful that the special branch has been moved into Mugabe's care. Nkomo's military men, 17,000 of them still in Zambia, are sullen.

Mugabe's biggest problem, nonetheless, is the endless task of juggling groups within his own fractious party. His choice of cabinet members was a careful balancing act. In his revolutionary exile past, he was more a chairman and conciliator than a party ruler in the mold of Nkomo. Mugabe has long been constricted by the need to win a consensus among his central committee of about 25 active members, some of whom still are belligerent and loath to follow the leader's new conciliatory path. Again, this is a matter of temperament, not ideology. There are figures on the central committee, now in the Cabinet, who are itching to "put the boot in"—against Nkomo and the Ndebele as much as against the whites. The most important question of the next six months is whether Mugabe can transform himself from party balancer to national leader by using the existing machinery of government—the prime minister's office, the intelligence services, the defense ministry, which he also controls—to consolidate his own power at the expense of the committee.

The benefits of the peace are so huge that Mugabe should be able to keep people happy for a good 18 months or so, provided that he can control the central committee and avert threats of military destabilization from the whites, from South Africa, or from Nkomo's guerrillas. Already the rural schools, clinics, and churches are reopening. Agricultural and cattle schemes, resettlement projects, the rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons, are about to restart.

The old, prim, often hypocritical but orderly and efficient ways of Europe soon will surrender to the tough African paradox of lax authoritarianism. But if Zimbabwe retains its economic vigor, it should become the focus of southern and central African power. One-party states vary. Machel's Mozambique, one of the hardest, yet still in possession of a genuine revolutionary momentum, already is showing signs of creeping back to economic liberalism, with social change perhaps to follow. Zambia's moribund leadership soon could give way to a younger, thrusting technocracy, so long frustrated. Even Tanzania's government apparatus, whose paralysis and turpitude have so long been obscured by the readiness of Western suckers to inhale Nyerere's guru vapors, may begin to crack too.

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It would be wishful to think that such a clean-up and regeneration in central Africa could precipitate a change of heart in Afrikaner South Africa. By the game of sheer numbers, the stakes cannot be compared. Whites in the rest of Africa have proved expendable. In Zimbabwe, a mere 278,000 (at their zenith) were eventually rolled over by seven million blacks. In South Africa it is different. If you throw in two and a half million Coloreds (people of mixed race) and three quarters of a million Indians, you have over seven million non-blacks to pit against the black nationalist tide. It's a different ballgame. And as Richard Nixon used to say, in a rather different context: "That's the big one."

Xan Smiley

Xan Smiley is editor of the London-based *Africa Confidential.*

Labor waits in the wings.

Begin on the Brink

Jerusalem

Not since the death of General Francisco Franco in 1975 has there been such a slow, agonizing demise as that being experienced now by the government of Israeli prime minister Menahem Begin.

In the past month, a number of events have triggered alarm in some quarters—hope in others—that the Begin government's nearly three years in office is about to end. Every public opinion poll taken in the last six months has shown that the Labor alignment, which formed the basis of Israel's governments from 1948 until 1977, would easily defeat Begin's Likud coalition. The latest poll shows that Labor would win an absolute majority in the 120-member Israeli Knesset.

Such a victory would be unprecedented. No party ever has been able to form a government without entering into a coalition with smaller parties, and few expect that the Labor alignment actually would win such a majority. But few doubt that the next government will be formed by Labor. The only question is when—within months or after the statutory date for elections in November 1981.

Begin's comfortable majority of more than 70 seats has dwindled to 64 or 65. His most immediate and most serious problems now are political and not ideological. Inflation here now is running at well over 100 percent. Israelis speak wistfully of the time when inflation was "only" 30 percent; they are amused that Americans appear to be hysterical about a rate of inflation that still is under 20 percent. Unemployment, a problem that Israel has not faced since 1966, is beginning to grow. For the first time in years, the number of persons seeking jobs is greater than the number of positions available.

Israel's finance minister, Yigael Hurwitz, was brought into the government to solve the country's severe economic problems after months of drift under Simha Ehrlich, a Liberal party member of the Likud coalition. Ehrlich stayed on as a deputy prime minister. Hurwitz was brought in not because of his economic expertise so much as because of a general perception that he was "tough" enough to enforce austerity measures. That "toughness" should be a prime requisite in a government that already has a theoretically strong prime minister gives an indication of the kind of leadership Begin is providing. Despite hardline rhetoric from Hurwitz and some tough measures—food subsidies have been removed and an apparently austere budget has been approved for the next fiscal year—it still is not clear that Hurwitz's new economic program will sufficiently dampen inflation to mollify the public.

Within the government, where Hurwitz enjoyed a honeymoon with his fellow ministers when he first came to office, the carping has begun. Hurwitz has weathered a number of confrontations with other ministers and managed to put a positive face on his situation. Unless the numbers get better for him, however, the clamor doubtless will increase. Hurwitz is not the sort of man to accept a defeat gracefully. Begin pinned so much on Hurwitz's assumption of the finance portfolio that it is hard to see how the Begin government could survive his resignation.

The current government is a patchwork of political parties, constituencies, ideologies, and preoccupations that always threaten to develop into chaos without strong leadership to hold it together. And strong leadership is precisely what is lacking. Faced with conflicts wherever he turns, Begin decides by postponing—a characteristic that his liberal critics don't find entirely repugnant, considering the nature of some of his decisions when he summons up the gumption to impose his will.

When Moshe Dayan resigned as foreign minister last fall, it took Begin five months to appoint a successor—Speaker of the Knesset Yitzhak Shamir. Shamir, a vociferous hawk on matters concerning relations with the Arabs, opposed the Camp David peace agreement and abstained when it came up for a vote in the Knesset last year. He says he would do the same thing today. Shamir speaks English only haltingly, a serious handicap in a position where the country's principal ally is the United States. In fact, Shamir's most important qualification for the job seems to have been his unswerving party loyalty.

Visible cracks have begun forming in Begin's coalition. Almost every week on the nightly news broadcast following the Sunday cabinet session, verbatim reports are carried of arguments—

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occasionally including shouting matches and threats of violence—among the ministers. Ehrlich does not miss an opportunity to snipe at Hurwitz. Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon, who is also chairman of the Government Settlement Committee, which plays a critical role in deciding when and where to place new settlements on the West Bank, is despised by many of his colleagues, and they make no secret of their feelings in private or public. Sharon's continued presence in the government, despite embarrassing and gratuitous statements to Jews in America and the enmity of other ministers and Likud members in Israel, is another indication of the government's weakness. Any prime minister with authority would have fired Sharon six months ago as a disruptive force. Begin has to put up with Sharon because the government's margin now is so thin that his defection might bring Begin down.

Begin cannot maintain his government without the support of the National Religious party, which has 12 seats in the Knesset and three ministers in the cabinet. The NRP also is a coalition, however, and is experiencing strains of its own. Interior Minister Josef Burg, Israel's principal negotiator in the autonomy talks with Egypt and the United States, is under attack within his party from Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, who represents a younger, more hawkish constituency than the old guard religious-labor faction that supports Burg. Burg runs at the top of the NRP ticket, but Hammer and others would like to depose him.

Earlier this month Burg held "secret" talks with Labor alignment leader Shimon Peres, who would be prime minister were Labor to come to power. It was generally understood that the purpose of the talks was to discuss the role the NRP would play in a Labor government if the NRP brought down the Begin government. Since the NRP has been a member of every government since the state was created in 1948, it is not unthinkable that the NRP could switch from supporting Likud policies to supporting Labor's if the price were right. If Hammer and his supporters lean too heavily on Burg, he could force the dissolution of the government and then throw in his hand with Peres and the Labor alignment. Such a threat remains, for the moment, anyway, more potential than real.

As word of the Burg-Peres meetings leaked, word also leaked that Burg's Interior Ministry had "quietly" begun technical preparations for holding early elections—a responsibility of the Interior Ministry. It is entirely possible that Burg staged the meetings and ordered the preparations for early elections in order to deliver an elaborate message to his opponents within the NRP and to Begin: "If I go, you're coming with me." That kind of brinkmanship is not unknown in Israel.

The infighting in the NRP is not unique, but it is symptomatic. Much the same kind of jockeying goes on within the Liberal party, where the various ministers and Knesset members jealously watch each other to make sure that no one gets an advantage. Again, if Begin were a strong leader, he would impose his will on the situation. But he seems to be able to do little more than admonish ministers not to shout in cabinet meetings and to remind them that he is running the show.

Other threatening noises for Begin are beginning to come from the Democratic Movement in the Knesset. Originally the movement was the 15-member Democratic Movement for Change, but the "change" part of the coalition split off and its eight members stopped supporting the government in 1978. Now an informal vote of the Democratic Movement's central body has called on its six members to stop supporting the government as well. Since the Democratic Movement is vastly overrepresented in the government—Deputy Prime Minister Yigael Yadin and two other Cabinet members are members of the DM—some of its Knesset members are reluctant to heed the vote of the party's ruling body. Ironically, the DMC was the single most important reason for Labor's 1977 fall from power, since it attracted votes that otherwise would have gone to the Labor alignment and allowed it to carry the election.

Yadin has plenty of reasons to quit the government. Virtually none of the policies he campaigned for have been adopted. He finds himself continually in opposition to the government's settlement policy on the West Bank. A huge urban renewal project for which he is responsible—part of his promise to do more for Israel's poor and underprivileged Jews— is in jeopardy because of Hurwitz's austerity program. Yadin, however, continues to justify his presence in the government on the grounds that the government has accomplished a great deal. Privately, he and everyone else knows that in the next election the Democratic Movement will be all but eclipsed. If Yadin decides to run again after this, his first experience with electoral politics, he may be elected, but he almost certainly will not be a member of the government—a position of stature he clearly enjoys.

In that respect, Yadin's position illustrates why the Begin government—which by all natural laws should have expired months ago—continues to exist. "This government's weakness is its strength," one Knesset member observed last week. The Begin government survives by lurching from crisis to crisis, assuaging first this group and then that, because it has been able to give enough to supportive Knesset members to win their continued backing—and because of the certain knowledge of many first-term Likud Knesset members that after the next election they will no longer be around. Begin has no room to maneuver. He cannot, as did Israel's late prime minister David Ben Gurion Sude, threaten to resign and form a new government by bringing in new parties to form a majority. If Begin resigns, new elections will have to be held; Begin almost certainly will not be prime minister. So he and his supporters hang on.

But can he hang on indefinitely, or at least until the

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elections in 1981? Last autumn, the collapse of the government appeared imminent. On top of the economic problems, pressure from the United States, crumbling relationships with European countries, and a debilitating stroke, Begin almost lost the crucial support of the super-religious Agudat Yisrael Knesset faction when the Knesset failed to approve a tightening of the country's liberal abortion law. But Begin finally managed to get the law changed; Agudat Yisrael did not withdraw its support, the government did not fall, and Begin's health improved.

When Hurwitz took over as finance minister, Begin again bought a little more time, as his dissatisfied supporters waited to see what would happen.

The furor that resulted here over the United States's vote against Israel in the United Nations Security Council did not directly benefit Begin. Those who oppose the government's settlement policy on the West Bank feel too strongly about it to lay aside their differences and support Begin. But Carter's invitation to Begin and Sadat to come to the White House in April once again buys Begin more time. The autonomy negotiations are at a crucial stage now and Begin should be able to delay any crucial vote that could topple the government until after May 26, the theoretical deadline for concluding the negotiations. If the negotiations are successful, then Begin may survive a little longer.

The autonomy negotiations present a formidable hurdle for Begin's government. As Begin reminded Israelis while being interviewed on television here after Carter's invitation was announced, any agreement reached in the negotiations must be approved by 61 members of the Knesset. It is possible that what Begin would have to concede to satisfy Egypt may be more than 61 members of the present Knesset are willing to approve. On the other hand, if Begin does not reach agreement with Egypt, the prestige Begin has enjoyed because of the Camp David accords will be even further weakened and his government put in even greater jeopardy.

Begin's government has passed the halfway point of its mandate from the Israeli electorate. The National Religious party always has enjoyed influence with the government far beyond its numbers because of its ability to provide the majority for whatever party is forming the government. In return, the NRP gets its way over matters important to it. But a strong element within the Labor alignment is anti-religious and has never been happy with the power that the NRP has exercised. If the polls should continue to show Labor's strength growing, the NRP—despite public disclaimers of its loyalty to Begin—could decide to throw in with Labor and bring down the government sooner rather than later in order to strike a more favorable bargain with Labor before the opportunity passes.

Even though Begin has shown a remarkable ability to stay in office despite the general deterioration—the economy, relations with the United States and Europe, vociferous opposition from the farmers, defections within his own party—the horizon here is too close to make confident predictions that he will survive. The situation is too brittle, the Begin government's dependency on Begin too great, his health—although apparently good now—is too fragile, and the opposition to the government too implacable to expect that his government can survive until the end of its term.

Lawrence Meyer

Lawrence Meyer is a writer currently living in Israel.

Alms in the welfare state.

Corporate Charity

by Natalie Wexler

It's become an annual ritual in most offices: someone, a fellow worker, approaches your desk and suggests that you make a contribution to the United Way. He may or may not add that management sure would like to make a good showing this year and sure would like to see everybody contribute. All you have to do is instruct payroll to deduct a certain amount from your paycheck—a mere pittance, when spread out over 52 weeks—and there you have it: almost painless, almost mindless charity.

A lot of people succumb to this pitch—about 50 million of them, according to United Way's 1978 annual

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report. And the payroll-deduction method of fund-raising accounted for over 60 percent of United Way's total take last year, which was an impressive $1.4 billion. But is all of this really necessary? At a time when the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is spending $219.3 billion a year on a dizzying array of social service programs, surely it could spend a few more million to take on the functions of the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the Family Service Agency—three of the eight agencies that consistently get the lion's share of United Way funding. More to the point, why hasn't it taken on these functions already?

In fact, it's pretty hard to distinguish the United Way from HEW, and it will get even harder after the "E" drops out and the department concentrates exclusively on health and welfare. Like the government, the United Way gets most of its money in the form of a tax—theoretically voluntary. (A study commissioned by the United Way found 25 percent of donors complaining of "unfair pressure tactics," and some Army employees recently sued their employer because their names had been put on a list of "non-contributors.") And like the government, the United Way—not the donor—decides which agencies are going to get how much.

Even more important, the United Way prefers to fund agencies that are middle-of-the-road, won't rock the boat, and that usually are controlled by middle-class whites rather than by the people who are the actual objects of charity. In the case of some large United Way agencies—the YMCA, the YWCA, the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Scouts—it is often those middle-class white people themselves who are the objects of the United Way's "charity." Even William Aramony, United Way's national executive, seems to acknowledge that the United Way is something of an anachronism in the age of the welfare state. "That kind of needy went out in 1935 with the Social Security Act," he said recently in response to a question about why the United Way wasn't spending more on the hard-core poor. "In our society today the needs of the poor are largely met by tax responsibility."

So if the government is meeting the needs of the poor, does that mean there's no longer any place for private charity? Not necessarily. There are at least two arguments that can be offered in defense of voluntary giving, even in the most extensive of welfare states. One is that there always are going to be some philanthropic projects that the government chooses not to fund, projects that will seem like crazy ventures with uncertain or perhaps dangerous results. There is no reason why the majority of taxpayers should fund projects that they don't agree with. But others will always see something worthwhile in an innovative scheme, and they should have the right to gamble on it.

The second argument can be trickier to defend, but it's also probably the most widely accepted. Charity, as Shakespeare said of mercy, is twice bless'd; it blesses both those who give and those who receive. But few gifts, no matter how sincerely given, come without some strings attached. Every act of charity is potentially an act of social control, because the giver usually has some idea of what he would like the recipient to do or become. But at its best, charity can be an ennobling experience for both parties—and that probably happens most often when there is some personal involvement on both sides.

Unfortunately, the United Way isn't meeting either of these arguments for private charity. It has transformed the act of charity into an almost automatic, knee-jerk reaction, and it has created a well-paid private bureaucracy to distribute the money more or less along the same lines a public bureaucracy would follow. The public bureaucracy, at least, is accountable to the taxpayers. The private United Way bureaucracy is accountable mainly to the corporate executives who serve on its local and national boards of directors. The 170 members of the Central Maryland United Fund advisory board, for example, included 60 corporation presidents, 19 corporation chairmen, and 23 corporation vice presidents, according to a 1971 study.

Although in recent years the United Way has been trying to introduce women and minorities into this group, it's still a rare United Way board that is willing to buck the status quo. For one thing, the newcomers, regardless of their sex and race, generally share the outlook of the old guard. But the basic reason for this conservatism is simple: the United Way depends for its support on the goodwill of the companies that allow it to solicit funds on their property. Offend the executives and you lose access to their employees' paychecks.

Take the case of the Carolina Brown Lung Association, an organization that works to collect benefits for mill workers who have contracted byssinosis after years of inhaling cotton dust on the job. The group applied for United Way funding in a number of cities in North and South Carolina, pointing out that for years their members—the mill workers—had contributed to the United Way through payroll deductions. But who sits on United Way boards in places like Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, a J. P. Stevens stronghold, and Greensboro, North Carolina, home of Cone Mills? Textile executives, and those executives' friends and business associates. Not surprisingly, the Brown Lung Association was not welcomed into the United Way family.

Similar instances of the United Way's hostility to controversial groups are not hard to come by. In Seattle a few years ago, a United Way-supported community organization began a campaign against a proposed freeway that would have disrupted the group's constituent neighborhoods. The organization's United Way funding was quickly cut off. Organizations that offer abortion counseling, including Planned Parenthood, also have been denied United Way funds in some places, and the Philadelphia United Way recently

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caused something of a flap when it denied funding to Women's Way, a coalition of feminist groups whose activities include contraceptive counseling and abortion services. In the ensuing controversy, it came out that the United Way has a five-year-old agreement with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia which prohibits it from funding any program in opposition to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. Black groups also have been critical of the United Way. Although the United Way says that one-third of its money goes to agencies that help minorities, only 3.75 percent goes to agencies *run* by blacks, according to *Forbes* magazine.

The United Way has been coming under increasing attack lately from groups representing these constituencies—women, blacks, political activists, and even a number of health agencies—who oppose its lucrative monopoly on workplace giving. The United Way has responded to this sniping with heavy artillery. The appearance of Combined Health Agency Drives (CHADs), a potentially serious rival to the United Way, produced what has become known in charity (as opposed to charitable) circles as "the Heart Memo." In it, according to the American Heart Association, United Way chief Aramony declared, "We won't sit back and let CHADs happen; we anticipate cooperation or confrontation."

Sure enough, the United Way did not sit back. In 1976, for instance, it brought pressure on 182 businesses and governments in the Los Angeles area that were allowing a group called Associated In-Group Donors (AID) to compete with the United Way in the workplace. AID's income fell from $18 million to $8.5 million in one year. In 1978, a Superior Court judge ordered the Los Angeles United Way to let its member agencies accept funds from AID and to stop trying to eliminate its rival.

This year, the scene of battle shifted to Capitol Hill, where the House Subcommittee on Civil Service was investigating the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), an annual fundraising drive among government employees that includes the United Way and a number of other groups. The groups complained that the United Way, which oversees the running of the campaign, benefits unfairly from a complex formula for dividing up undesignated contributions. The formula, which is based on averages of past contribution levels, guarantees that even if the health agencies get more of the designated funds than the United Way—which is in fact the case—the United Way will get more of the undesignated funds.

The United Way responded to these complaints with what Representative Patricia Schroeder, Democrat of Colorado, chairman of the subcommittee, called "the most intensive lobbying campaign imaginable . . . a furious assault." And for a while, it looked as though the assault had backfired. Schroeder, apparently livid, launched her own furious assault against the director of the Washington CFC, William Schaeffler, during the subcommittee hearings. "I received phone calls from every member of Congress you could get your hands on," she complained. "I had everybody from United Way in Denver call and tell me I was the worst person that ever walked the face of the earth because you had contacted them. . . ."

But some of the lobbying paid off. Although the subcommittee recommended some substantial changes in the campaign, four of the nine subcommittee members refused to endorse them. One of these dissenters, Representative Herbert E. Harris, Democrat of Virginia, whose district includes the national United Way headquarters, had been lobbied not only by United Way officials but also by two television station general managers and the publisher of a biweekly newspaper that had endorsed him. And in the end, the Office of Personnel Management virtually ignored the subcommittee's recommendations in issuing new regulations for the CFC. The only changes they incorporate are those designed to protect employees from coercion by office fundraisers.

This latest round would seem to confirm the entrenched position of the United Way. Elsewhere, however, there have been some cracks in the monopoly. At least five states and a number of local governments have allowed other charities to solicit their employees along with the United Way. And some corporations have tried similar experiments, finding that they bring on none of the fundraising chaos that the United Way direly predicts.

But almost 90 percent of the local United Ways still enjoy a monopoly on workplace solicitations, their complacency barely disturbed by attacks from fledgling organizations and fringe groups—the very organizations and groups that need private contributions most, since their functions are the least likely to be duplicated by the government.

Although the United Way professes to be constantly on the lookout for new groups to support, the 294 largest United Ways fund an average of only 1.5 new agencies a year—and fund them at a much lower level than older agencies. In Minneapolis, for example, the

drawing by Mike Peters

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local United Way funded 16 new agencies over a period of 10 years. Those agencies collectively received six percent of total United Way funding, or about half of what the Red Cross got. Although at first glance this discrepancy might appear only logical—after all, the Red Cross is much larger than any new agency could possibly be—such treatment can cripple the efforts of the dozens of new groups that spring up in large- and medium-sized cities every year. In order to get United Way funding, they have to prove their viability; but in order to be viable, they have to get funding. A well-established group like the Red Cross, which can raise a substantial amount of money on its own, is actually less in need of United Way funding than some unknown new group.

Of course, groups that are not funded by the United Way can and do get funding from other sources. In fact, the United Way accounts for only about 3.5 percent of all private giving. But much of that giving is done by large contributors, not by the small rank-and-file donors that are the United Way's bread and butter. The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, a Washington-based group that has been a leader in the drive to break down the United Way monopoly on fundraising in the workplace, has an alluring vision of a kind of mass philanthropy, stimulated by freedom of choice in payroll deductions and by tax credits for charitable gifts, that finally would take the control of charity out of the hands of the rich. It's a widely broadened definition of charity, one that could include gifts to radical political groups as well as to crippled children. And it's a definition that even the Supreme Court seemed to be leaning toward in a recent decision that granted Citizens for a Better Environment, an Illinois group, the status of a "charitable organization."

Allowing more groups to cash in on payroll deductions wouldn't necessarily make charitable giving any less automatic or any more personal than it is now. But at least it would make it more democratic. More people might at least think about where their money was going before sending that deduction authorization down to payroll. With the right safeguards against coercion—automatic bank drafts instead of automatic payroll deductions, for example—some people might decide not to give at all, feeling that they gave *before* they got to the office—namely, when they paid their taxes.

Borrow now, beg later.

The Great American Credit Collapse

by William J. Quirk

Every inflationary spiral contains within it the seeds of its own destruction. The German inflation of 1923 topped out when farmers refused to exchange their produce for any amount of paper marks. Money was then disregarded and the economy went on to a barter basis.

Over the past few weeks, the bond market has collapsed with a sickening thud, the victim of escalating interest. Since June 1979 the value of outstanding bonds has dropped 25 percent, a dollar loss of about $500 billion. By comparison, in 1929 we called it a depression when the stock market in October and November lost $23 billion. Today all the major banks, if they had to value their bond portfolios at current market rates, would be insolvent. The bond market, which annually raises $40 billion for business, is practically at dead stop. Respected conservative economists speak of a "national emergency." The federal government itself, owner of the printing press, must pay 16 percent to borrow money. The debt service on the national debt, of which $450 billion must be rolled over each year, will consequently climb to disastrous levels. Felix Rohatyn, noting "chaos in the credit markets," warns that the US is in a "slide towards bankruptcy." Today paper money doesn't count. These facts obviously describe a financial collapse—a point already becoming clear to the worker reading about 20 percent inflation while getting an eight percent raise.

The bond market collapsed when no amount of interest would induce the lender to part with his money for a promise to repay at some time in the future. Repayment now must be promised in days, not years—90 days, 180 days, and 270 days are common periods. The long-term lender has lost confidence in the stability of the dollar in which he will be repaid. Interest is the investor's return for the use of his money but can't protect him against repayment of his loan in

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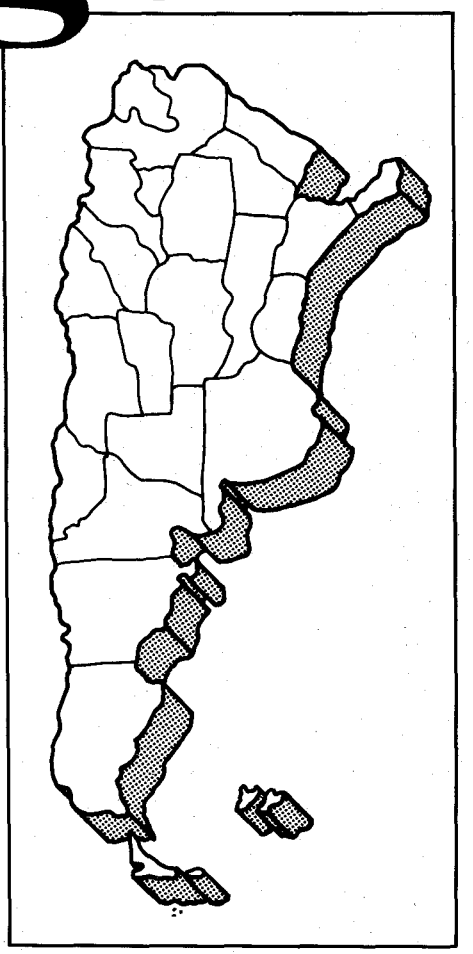
The New Argentina.



Everyone is talking about the *new* Argentina.

International leaders like Sunao Sonoda, Japan's foreign minister; President Francisco Morales Bermudez of Peru; Count Otto von Lambsdorff, minister of economics for West Germany; King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain; and Willibald Pahr, Austria's minister of foreign relations—all recent visitors.

Prominent guests like David Rockefeller, chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank; Michael Wilson, Canada's minister of foreign commerce, and Jack Spitzer, president of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

And it's easy to see why.

Look at the great natural beauty of Argentina, ranging from the snow-capped Andes to the rich farming land of the Pampa. Frankly, it's a country of almost unlimited agricultural, mineral and forest resources.

And the streets of Buenos Aires, its capital of more than 8 million people, and other Argentine cities are peaceful and safe once again for citizens and tourists. The dark night of domestic unrest and chaos is over.

William D. Rogers, the former U.S. assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, contrasting his visit to Argentina in 1979 with one in 1975, said: "Nowadays, we live in another atmosphere."

That *new* atmosphere is everywhere.

Argentina has always been a cultural center of the Americas, and once again, the famous Colon Theatre is the busy hub around which the musical and dramatic life of Buenos Aires revolves.

Leading musical ensembles like the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Aldo Cecato, the New York Philharmonic led by Zubin Mehta, and the Zurich Orchestra as well as famous stars like the internationally-acclaimed Italian tenor, Luciano Pavarotti, are featured. This year, Buenos Aires will celebrate its 400th anniversary with a year-long festival of the world's greatest music and musicians.

Argentina's economic future is equally bright. Net reserves in foreign exchange are $10 billion—compared with only $20 million in 1976. The balance of payments surplus for each of the last two years has been $2 billion.

Argentina's economic infrastructure continues to be expanded and strengthened. It is the leading Latin American country in nuclear development with a plant at Atucha completed and another at Embalse under construction. Four more electric-nuclear plants will be built by the year 2000. The billion-dollar Salto Grande hydro-electric dam between Argentina and Uruguay is already working.

The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank have approved loans of $420 million to help finance the $3.8 billion Yacyreta hydro-electric project on the Parana River along the Argentine-Paraguay border.

With its extensive on- and off-shore oil fields, Argentina expects to produce all of its own petroleum by 1982. What's more, the 1978-79 Argentine wheat harvest was 52.8% higher than the previous year. And industry is up 16.6% over last year.

As former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury William Simon said of Argentina following his recent trip: "In the past three years, it has seen more light than the previous thirty. And that is something seldom known in history."

The people and the government of Argentina are just as optimistic about the next 30 years. A new spirit is alive in Argentina—a spirit of vitality, determination and confidence in a better future for every citizen.

The Embassy of the Argentine Republic, 1600 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009

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funny money. Without confidence in the dollar the long-term bond market cannot exist. Foreigners stopped taking dollars in the late 1970s. In 1980 Americans are following suit.

Many individuals, of course, have played this game from the other side—undertaking heavy mortgage obligations in the expectation of repaying in cheap dollars. So it is not too surprising if the people being repaid with cheap dollars have had enough. Like the German farmers, investors have refused to exchange a known value—the current worth of a dollar—for something unknown, namely the value of a dollar five or 10 or 20 years from now. Inflation, by definition, destroys all long-term obligations. The long-term fixed interest bond is totally dependent upon a stable currency. For example, take a rosy view and assume that inflation goes along at a steady and cool rate of 10 percent per year. Assume a $10,000 20-year bond due in the year 2000: simply to preserve the purchasing power of his original capital the lender would have to be paid back $67,276 in the year 2000. The lender requires that amount to recover the original principal; it does not include any return for the use of his money and related credit risk.

As interest rates increase the bond owner gets to watch the value of his capital go down. Higher interest rates mean lower bond prices. In less than a year Treasury bonds have lost 30 percent of their value—Treasury 9⅛s of May 15, 2009, sold last May at par ($100), are trading now about $70. IBM's 25-year 9⅜ percent debentures issued last October are down to 76.5 percent of their face value. A trustee who bought a Pacific Telephone bond in 1967 would have lost more than half his principal by 1980: Pacific Telephone's 35-year six percent debentures issued in 1967 at $100 are down to around $47 today. This is a severe loss indeed on what was traditionally viewed as an investment for those who should take no chances—pensioners, widows, and orphans.

A trustee who must report such capital devastation to his beneficiaries is in for as painful an experience as the beneficiaries. He can, of course, explain that Pacific Telephone is still paying the $600 annual interest, and if the trust holds the bonds until 2000, Pacific Telephone will surely repay the original $10,000. He can give no assurance, however, that the $10,000 in the year 2000 will buy a salami sandwich.

Of course most trustees never intended to hold a bond until its maturity in the distant future. Who would invest in a security not due until 2020 which might be well beyond the expected lifetime of its purchaser? The trustee always thought that he could sell a bond for close to its face value if money was needed to send a child to college, for example. The bond could be sold in the secondary market for about what he paid—assuming, of course, that interest rates remained reasonably stable.

What will the trustee do next time to protect himself? He may invest in a money market fund. Virtually unknown five years ago, these funds have become a haven for scared money. Essentially a high-interest bank account, the funds now total $60 billion—including an addition of $6.8 billion in February and $7.9 billion in January. The funds invest largely in short-term federal notes, commercial paper, and certificates of deposit. Their appeal to the investor is defensive. All obligations are short term; the investor stays current with short-term interest rates and is free to withdraw his capital at will.

Europeans always have been puzzled by the American long-term bond. To them seven years is considered long term and floating or variable interest rates are used. But for the last 100 years the United States has funded its private and public growth with long-term (20 to 40 years) fixed-interest bonds. The stock market, while glamorous, has been relatively trivial as a source of funds. The due date of a long-term bond, say 2020, is far in the future. A great deal of change would be expected even in a fundamentally sound society. Only the United States has had the moral, political, and financial stability necessary to pull off such arrangements.

Would American bonds modeled after European standards sell? Say a seven-year term with variable interest, attractive call provisions and, perhaps, convertible to common stock. Are we just in a creative lull before someone comes up with the innovation that will permit the system to clear the overhang and go forward? Perhaps so, but there will be serious differences that impair productivity. A company, if it can only secure short-term financing, must hesitate before making a long-term investment. Playing roulette with financing costs has obvious dangers.

The immediate cause of the bond market collapse was Federal Reserve Chairman Volcker's statement of October 6, 1979. Volcker had just returned from the IMF meeting in Belgrade determined to buck up the fading dollar on international exchanges. Former chairman Miller's First Annual Fall Dollar Rescue (November 1978) had by this time completely run out of steam. Touted at the time as strong medicine likely to induce a recession, it was necessary, Miller said, to save the dollar. Many, in 1980, could not even recall the first rescue attempt, much less any strong medicine. But this time it was different. The problem, as Volcker saw it, was that Americans were treating credit like gasoline: no matter how much the price was raised, they continued to use about the same amount. The only solution was to ration it. Volcker adopted the currently fashionable monetarist philosophy and imposed stiff reserve requirements on the banks. The money supply was kept under a hand firm enough to please Milton Friedman.

In the past Volcker had been criticized for conservative rhetoric while the money printing presses rolled. But now, with the supply fixed—and demand fueled by continuing inflationary expectations—the squeeze was

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on and the price of money went right through the roof. Predictably, the first victims of the get-tough policy were the holders of the $2000 billion worth of outstanding bonds whose capital melted as interest rates rose to 20 percent. Volcker had promised that interest rates would decline as his measures took hold, "whatever the initial impact on interest rates." But he never promised when they would come down or what would come down with them.

The next victim was the stock market since historically, the bond and stock markets move together. Besides, why pay a brokerage commission to invest in a blue chip stock yielding a seven percent return when you can invest in a no-load money market fund yielding 13 or 14 or 15 percent and have relative safety of principal and free checking to boot?

Internationally, the Volcker policy has successfully strengthened the dollar. Europeans have been impressed by the Fed's resolve. But how much more domestic carnage will be tolerated for this goal seems questionable. Politically, the choice of bondholders as primary victims was brilliant. Bonds are held by a narrow and wealthy group of individuals and institutions. Probably every non-bondholder would agree that they are a perfect group to bear the brunt of the fight against inflation. But as the ripples go out all will be affected and the president's free ride on the inflation train will come to an end. Also, the institutions involved are very powerful. Government and the Federal Reserve exist to help them, not hurt them.

The president's free ride is not shared by people who are forced to sell their homes in the current housing market. Caught in the middle of a bursting housing bubble, home-sellers are an additional group of victims, as incredible interest costs have virtually closed down private sales of housing. The startling fact is that a three percent increase causes an increased monthly cost to the buyer of 23 percent. Take a $75,000 house (hardly a palace) and a $15,000 downpayment; at 12 percent the monthly mortgage cost to the buyer is $617.17; at 15 percent the monthly cost is $758.67. The prospective buyer has at least one good option—he can refuse to buy. The seller's options are more but worse: he can (1) lower the price or (2) himself provide some financing to the buyer. The second option, its legal problems aside, puts the seller into the lending business with all its risks just as the country heads into recession. Chairman Volcker's bubble-pricking policy wins either way. If the seller himself takes a note from the buyer, at least there will be no new money sloshing around the economy. If he lowers the price it is a clear win for the feds.

On March 14 President Carter, saying we are in a "dangerous situation that calls for urgent measures," announced his latest anti-inflation plan. The market had long discounted the president's expected credit controls, but they were even weaker than expected. Some limits on future credit card borrowing do not seem material to the problem. In any case the Fed is doing about all it can to limit credit and, in the absence of foreign exchange controls to prevent Eurodollar borrowing, about all that can be done.

Consumer credit, of course, has provided much of the funding for inflation. Non-housing consumer installment debt has doubled in the last four years—from $150 billion to $300 billion. This increase coincides with the beginning of the real depression for American workers, who have each year since 1974 experienced a decline in real purchasing power. The combined effect of inflation, the progressive tax system, and increased social security payments have decimated the middle-class paycheck. Middle-class taxpayers have risen into lofty tax brackets previously reserved for their betters. Their increased borrowing has been an obvious effort to maintain a constant standard of living in the face of lower real wages.

The amount of debt in the United States is stupendous. Government debt is $924 billion; business debt is $1232 billion; and household debt (mortgage and installment) is $1279 billion. It may be some comfort that as a percentage of GNP the overall total of debt has slightly decreased since 1946, when it was 155.9 percent, down to 145.5 percent in 1979. While consistent, the figures are nonetheless high—almost identical to those in 1921 to 1929. Moreover, the nature of the debt has changed sharply. Government debt, surprisingly enough, as a percentage of GNP, has declined sharply since World War II from 110.5 percent (1946) to 39.4 percent (1979). Business debt has risen from 29.4 percent (1946) to 52.2 percent (1979). The stunning increase has taken place in household debt—16 percent (1946) to 53.9 percent in 1979.

Is this level of household debt sustainable under any likely scenario? After Carter's program fails, if the Fed keeps to its plan, we must fall into the long-awaited recession. Because it has been postponed so long, the recession may well be severe. Indeed, a deflationary spiral may be as hard to control as an inflationary one.

There must be serious doubt about the economic resilience of the 74 million American households. Family income, extended by recent borrowing, is taut as a bowstring. Two-paycheck families seem reasonably prosperous but cannot afford the loss of a paycheck. One-paycheck families are already under severe stress. A typical taxpayer earning $30,000 immediately loses $10,000 to federal and local taxes. His remaining $1700 per month spendable income is heavily encumbered. Probably over 40 percent will go to debt—say $400 for mortgage; $100 for car payments; $100 for department store credit; and $100 for credit card payments. His problems are deeper than President Carter seems to realize. He is left with $1000 a month to feed, clothe, maintain, and educate a middle-class family. The Fed seems to think he can make it if he exercises some self-discipline. Maybe he can't. The point is that this time the Fed is deadly serious. Europeans, who have a lot to lose, are betting on that.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Living Through Wars

Why, why, why? The question echoes down the centuries. Well, one century. Why do film people adapt important novels, about which there is no special best-seller incentive, without (a) a way to reproduce the novel cinematically or (b) a way to deconstruct it and reconstruct it authentically in cinematic terms? Wim Wenders did (a) with *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*; Harold Pinter did (b) with his as-yet-unproduced screenplay of Proust. Volker Schlöndorff, that earnest German mediocrity, has done neither with Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*.

Schlöndorff's past promised little, it's true. I've seen *Young Törless*, from Musil, *Michael Kohlhass*, from Kleist, *The Sudden Fortune of the Poor People of Kombach*, *A Free Woman*, and *Le Coup de Grace*, all of which were tedious differently. (To make *Michael Kohlhass* tedious is no tiny accomplishment.) Most of them panted in that miasma of artiness that seems to thicken as one moves eastward through Europe—a bit worse, admittedly, in Czechoslovakia and Poland but bad enough in the Germanies. It consists of 19th-century bourgeois smugness about culture transmuted into contemporary filmic terms. The taste that took Bruckner and Wilhelmine architecture seriously, now modernized, takes Schlöndorff seriously—along with the Czech Véra Chytilová and the Poles Andrzej Wajda and Wojciech Has.

In Schlöndorff's films from Musil and Kleist, failed though they were, he seemed at least to have some idea of the work. With *The Tin Drum* Schlöndorff discloses no comprehension of the work's essentiality; thus it isn't treated in either the (a) or (b) vein mentioned above. Schlöndorff does more or less what John Huston did with *Wise Blood*: he follows the story (up to a point) and uses much of the original dialogue. The result is like a fuller version of Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* in place of the plays. I know that Grass himself collaborated on the screenplay—most of which was written by three people, including Schlöndorff—but this turns out to mean no more, in quality, than the fact that Nabokov wrote the screenplay of the unsatisfactory *Lolita*.

To begin with, Schlöndorff's film uses only the first two-thirds of the novel, until the end of World War II. This is ridiculous. If the novel was too long to handle as an organism, that was a prime reason for leaving it alone—not only because of narrative but perspective. The whole novel is recounted by Oskar Matzerath in a mental hospital where he is taken near the end of the book. Without those events at the end, you can't put him in the hospital at the beginning; and if he's not in the hospital from the beginning, the entire texture is damaged.

Second, and very difficult (a problem that was insoluble even for Pinter with Proust), is the subjectivity of the narrative. Oskar tells the story in two constantly changing voices, first and third persons, but always as Oskar. This is intrinsically impossible in film without removing Oskar from the screen and making him the camera, which is not film, it's a film stunt.

Third, connected with that, virtually everything that happens in the novel leaks into the story tangentially, is not dramatized, is figuratively seen out of the corner of Oskar's eye. For example, the discovery of the body of the suicided Markus, the toy dealer, is given coolly, naively, in the book. The film treats it head-on, conventionally, with a close-up of the dead man's face on the desk. Tonally, this is false and destructive.

Then, connected to *that*, is the matter of point of view, which is quite distinct from subjectivity. How could the boy Oskar have seen—as we see—his mother and Jan Bronski whacking away together in a hotel bedroom? The omniscient-narrator eye of the camera further hurts the essential tone.

As does the absence of the book's rich saturation in history, the German-Polish-Kashubian memories and references that recreate the past of the city of Danzig where most of it takes place. Grass's novel intends, among other things, to be a saga-epic, a locus by which a culture may represent itself to the future. Oskar is the bard-hero of the work, with a voice and eye very much his own. Not a wisp of any of this in Schlöndorff. The events of the film happen in the present tense, that's all, with Oskar involved in most of them. Critics have noted some resemblance between Grass's novel and *Ulysses*. The film has about as much resemblance to Grass as Joseph Strick's wretched film of *Ulysses* has to Joyce.

Contradictorily, many of the film's components are first-rate. Igor Luther's cinematography is perfect—chilly, precise, positing. Every member of the cast, without exception, is good: Mario Adorf and Angela Winkler as Oskar's parents, the Polish star Daniel Olbrychski as Jan, Berta Drews as the old grandmother. Even Charles Aznavour, patently dubbed though he is, has the adoring sadness of face and manner for Markus. Fritz Hakl and Mariella Oliveri, the two midgets whose troupe Oskar joins for a while, are

Films Worth Seeing

Best Boy. Ira Wohl's unexploitative good documentary about his mentally retarded cousin of 52. But the cousin's quiet, lovely mother is really the center.

The Left-Handed Woman. Peter Handke directed his own screenplay (written before his novel) about a woman's respite from the world and probable return. Edith Clever. Crystalline.

The Trials of Alger Hiss. John Lowenthal's 166-minute documentary tries to be objective. Newsreels interwoven with recent interviews. Well done, intelligently worrisome.

Our Hitler. Not a documentary. Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's seven hours of film poems seem to say: "I can't sleep. These are my nightmares about Germany, the world, the future." Immense, plainly flawed, powerful.

SK

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splendid, the first full of friendly wisdom, the second full of charm. And Schlöndorff's decision to use a boy as Oskar, instead of a midget—since Oskar throws himself down a flight of stairs at three in order to stunt his growth—proves apt, since it differentiates him from the midgets he meets later. The boy, David Bennent, is a laconic, mysterious, explosive little madman.

I suppose that not much of the film was actually shot in Danzig since the old city was smashed in the war, but the locations have the right quasi-claustrophobic feeling. Schlöndorff's direction varies from the adequate to the laborious. The troupe of midgets, on a tour of the war front, dancing on top of a coastal pillbox—that's a shot etched cleanly. But much of it is ordinary and some of it obtrusive, like the iris shots and the focus-racking. And why, of all moments, was Oskar's birth made subjective? We come out with him, but that's where subjectivity ends.

The Tin Drum has not been filmed. Grass created Oskar as a refuser of responsibility (he stunts his growth but gets involved in history nonetheless); as a protester (his screams can shatter glass, but this ends as only a vaudeville trick); as someone who refuses adulthood (but he fathers a son); as a drummer trying to drown out the world around him (but drumming is just a nuisance that alters nothing). That much of the book is synopsized in the film. What is lost is any sense of Oskar as a German artist's symbol of disgust and rage and agony about Germany, a pre-Syberberg anti-romantic romanticism, deluged in a virtuosic mélange of styles. The film is a reduction, nearly a travesty. It's only the story of an odd little freak moving through some by-now familiar history.

Another view of another war. Two Americans, Glenn Silber and Barry Alexander Brown, have made *The War at Home*, a feature-length documentary, set in Madison, Wisconsin, and centered on the University of Wisconsin campus, about the growing resistance to the Vietnam War during the 1960s. As is standard now wherever possible, present-day interviews are spliced in with newsreel footage of those people then or with events then about which they have more to say now. The picture traces the changes from continent pacifism to strong campus protest and police violence, from apathy in the townsfolk to considerable support. The climax is the bombing of the Army

HOW PUBLIC POLICY CREATED A PUBLIC SCANDAL

Today more than one million elderly Americans live—and almost surely will die—in nursing homes under conditions acknowledged to be a national disgrace. Yet the $12 billion industry responsible for these appalling conditions is almost entirely a creature of public policy, funded by tax dollars, and more intensely regulated than any other institution in American life. What went wrong? Here, finally, is the definitive account of what nursing homes today are really like—the physical decay, the understaffing, the overmedication, the occasional brutality, the overwhelming boredom—and how public policy has contributed to making them that way. Now leading public health expert Bruce Vladeck urges a series of essential reforms.

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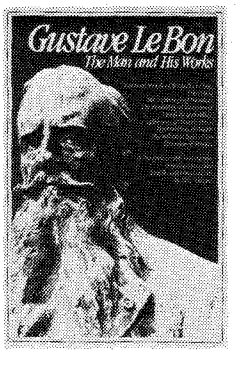

Gustave Le Bon
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A presentation with introduction, first translations into English, and edited extracts from Le Bon's major works by Alice Widener. The founder of social psychology, Le Bon (1841-1931) predicted the worldwide advance of socialism and almost all its now-apparent social, political and economic consequences. The extracts are from Le Bon's *The Crowd, Psychological Laws of the Evolution of Peoples, The Psychology of Socialism, The Evolution of Matter, Opinions and Beliefs, The Psychology of Revolutions*, and *Aphorisms of Modern Times*. Hardcover $8.00, Paperback $3.50.

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Mathematics Research Center on campus, in which several were hurt and one man was killed. One of the interviewees is Karl Armstrong, now serving a prison term for that bombing. Another is Armstrong senior. In fact the last shot is of the older Armstrong saying today that his generation made the mistake of thinking that the young folks were exaggerating the evils of the war, that the young folks were right.

Most of the political notables seen and heard in the 1960s seem ludicrous now—to some of us, they seemed ludicrous then—Johnson, Humphrey, Ted Kennedy, Nixon. Honorable exception: Senator Ernest Gruening. Some of the material is, in hindsight, bitter. The protesters obviously *had* to demonstrate in Chicago during the Democratic convention in 1968, but it seems clear now that, through backlash, those protests helped elect Nixon, and even Humphrey would have been better than that.

Underneath this painful and good film, however, is some glint of reassurance. This country makes terrible, often bloody messes—Joe McCarthy, Vietnam, Watergate—but unlike some other countries, it manages to clean up a few of them by itself, even if slowly and agonizingly. Winston Churchill's remark is not yet disproved: "Democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

Robert Brustein on theater

Two Couples

If you're looking for new trends in the American theater, I think I've got one for you—the hour-and-a-half play featuring two mismatched people in the throes of courtship or divorce. You'll forgive my generalizing on the basis of slight evidence, but I saw two such works in one day recently. One of these, *Tally's Folly*, now is sitting comfortably on the stage of the Brooks Atkinson, adored by Broadway audiences and hailed by critics as opposed as Walter Kerr and John Simon. The other, Wallace Shawn's *Marie and Bruce*, has just fallen off the stage of the New York Public Theater where it teetered precariously for a few weeks, making audiences miserable and enraging critics as opposed as Walter Kerr and John Simon. At the risk of further enhancing a growing reputation for perverseness, let me enter my customary dissent. I found Wilson's play a wittily written, carefully manufactured fake, while Shawn's piece struck me as powerful and heartbreaking, though admittedly ugly in nature and sloppily composed.

Tally's Folly is best described as a cute meet. Set in 1944, in an abandoned, ramshackle boathouse near Lebanon, Missouri, it is a 97-minute wooing scene between a bearded, middle-aged Jewish accountant named Matt Friedman and a 31-year-old nurse's aid from a wealthy family called Sally Tally. The setting, the situation, and the unlikely couple promise a stage blend of William Inge and Paddy Chayefsky, which Marshall Mason's production dispenses with the consistency of an egg cream mixed with Gilbey's Gin. As played by Judd Hirsch, with Yiddish inflections and a voice that snaps through the house like a revolver report, Matt Friedman combines the functions of chorus, stage manager, protagonist, comic relief, and focus of interest for Jewish audiences. He describes the time and the place, dallies with Sally Tally, imitates Humphrey Bogart, and tells a bunch of Yiddish stories. He is, in short, one of those wise and witty, wonderfully unforgettable stage characters that you pray you never have to meet, and despite the clever efforts of the gifted Mr. Hirsch to endow him with some depth, is less a living personage than a treasury of Jewish folklore.

Trish Hawkins, playing Sally, has even less to work with, so she is forced to settle for the familiar stage spinster with the cloying ingenue voice, as invented by Julie Harris. Her role consists primarily of reactions—listening to Friedman's anecdotes and disapproving of his impersonations—when she is not engaged, for reasons that constitute virtually the entire plot, in resisting his amorous advances. Since Matt loves Sally and Sally is perceived, despite her coyness, to be interested in Matt, most of the playwright's energy and ingenuity are expended in finding devices to keep them out of each other's arms until the end of the play. Matt makes a confession—characteristically in the form of an anecdote—about the fate suffered by his European family at the hands of the Germans. Because of this "border tragedy," he has resolved "never to bring into this world another child to be killed for a political purpose," a decision you may recognize from your reading in other fictions, which is about the only place that people elect to be childless because of the world situation. For her part, Sally reveals that, as a result of a fortunate hysterectomy, she is now unable to bear any children, which makes these two characters just about perfect for each other, in spite of their differing backgrounds. As soon as Matt is able to persuade Sally that he didn't invent his own story because he was aware of hers, they both go off to live happily ever after in St. Louis, having discharged their debts to world politics and to the inscrutable benefits of modern medicine.

Wilson obviously has hit on a terrific formula for playwriting, if not for marriage brokering, and one can hardly fault his genius for creating symmetrical solutions to artificial problems. What one might question, however, is why he has expended such a talent for fastidious craftsmanship on such a shallow situation. The historical setting seems devised more for nostalgia than for cogent social commentary, and the "sound design"—barking dogs, chirping crickets, lapping water—is of the kind that used to drive Chekhov up the wall when Stanislavski used it in 1901. Worse, the characters seem to have no life beyond their function in the plot. We can't expect Dostoyevski in our stage confections, but surely people have more depth than this, even in Lebanon, Missouri. In *Tally's Folly* Lanford Wilson is functioning less as a penetrating dramatist than as a theatrical efficiency expert. Why the play even ends on time, its last line (spoken by Mr. Hirsch while looking at his watch) being: "And so, all's well that ends . . . right on the button." Precisely.

Marie and Bruce does not observe the clock very well at all. It is messy and sprawling and ill-formed, but it left me, nevertheless, quite limp and vaguely depressed at its conclusion. I'm not grateful to the author for this reaction, but I have to concede that he achieved it honestly. Though not identified as such,

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MORNING IN THE ISLANDS

We had sat up all night hearing it roar, the mere
Sea, roaring out of the large darkness that was full
Of the only idea of ocean, overarched
Higher above our listening than what we heard
Was itself above the roaring. Then afterwards,
Day came toward us wearing an argument of light.
It turned us to the brightness of our deceptions,
The rightness of our wrongings of the visible
Sky, in all its various state of mind. It was
To get the point of some pediment, supported
By studied columns above a deeply read sea,
That we ourselves had kept on being part of the
Picture for so long. Behind us, intent on far
Distances, were clear-headed cliffs; below, what we
Had been ignoring sang in the heart of the rock.

John Hollander

Marie and Bruce (unlike Matt Friedman, who is too benevolent to be convincing) are genuinely Jewish characters, and what Shawn has created here—with the aid of two splendid actors, Louise Lasser and Bob Balaban—is the agony of a really miserable Jewish marriage. I don't mean to say the situation is typical, but it is recognizable as a piece of the truth blown up to monstrous proportions. Performed in a simple, modular, white setting that revolves the scenes from a bedroom to a cocktail party to a Chinese restaurant, *Marie and Bruce* begins and ends with a shriek of marital agony by the female protagonist which does not subside in pitch or volume until the final curtain. "Let me tell you something," she says, sitting up in bed with her husband, her hair decorated with two awful red plastic bows, "I find my husband so goddamn irritating that I'm planning to leave him."

This remark is the signal for a long monologue that her "worthless piece of shit" of a husband who, when he emerges from the bedclothes, seems much too mild a milquetoast to deserve her fury. Yet the odd thing is how Bruce eventually reveals himself as pretty much the monster Marie says he is, not so much from any particular heroic malevolence as from his maddening detachment from his wife's unhappiness. At one of those endless, mindless New York cocktail parties, where leering life-size puppets are indistinguishable from the actual guests, Bruce wanders through the room like a horny Ulysses, attending to his wife's needs primarily by loading her down with six or seven highballs, which she is forced to juggle on her thighs, her dress, in the crooks of her arms. Getting drunker and drunker, Marie suddenly conceives a new sexual passion for her husband while he soliloquizes about the other women he has been attracted to, asking her, when she finally passes out, "Why is it that whenever we have a conversation, you always get sick?"

The final scene, in the restaurant, shows us that the marriage is just about hopeless. As a group of homosexuals discuss their stomach troubles in sickening detail at the adjoining table, Marie launches into her ultimate assault on Bruce, while he keeps his attention fixed on the eggroll and the noodles. "This is very sad," she says, "I mean our dinner is spoiled, but my life was spoiled because I met you." "I don't imagine you'll be wanting any dessert," he replies, as the two sit wanly, desperately, amidst the rubble of their marriage. Bruce has proven Marie's contention that he is not "a living person," and when she proceeds to strike him violently about the head, all he can do is try to hold her hands. It is as if Shawn had taken all the Jewish self-irony previously seen good-naturedly by Woody Allen, Jules Feiffer, Mel Brooks, Marshall Brickman, and numerous others, and shown us its underside in ferocious, sardonic self-loathing. The gold in the streets, anticipated by Jewish immigrants when they first came to this country, has turned into ashes in the bed. *Marie and Bruce* is one of the most savage assaults yet on the failure of the American promise.

The acting is very hard to assess by conventional standards. When Louise Lasser begins to speak, she seems television-size, barely audible, and she rarely gives the audience the benefit of any vocal range. But it is difficult to describe how deeply her performance affected me. Other critics have commented on her girth, unjustly I believe; the weight she now is carrying, admittedly inappropriate for Mary Hartman, is a perfect manifestation of Marie's depression. Lasser's characterization has all the failings and all the strengths associated with "private moments." At times, we feel we are invading her soul; at others, we are witnesses, and sharers, of unbearable anguish. I can understand why people would have strong negative reactions to this performance; I can only tell you that I personally found it more overpowering than anything I have seen in the theater this year. Bob Balaban, in a more diffident role, is only slightly less effective—cold-blooded, frozen, immobile, like an engine that has run out of oil and clutched. As for Wilford Leach's direction and design, for all their jagged edges, they are loyal servants of this appalling, traumatizing play.

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In The Absence of Power
by Haynes Johnson
(Viking Press; $12.95)

The President Who Failed
by Clark R. Mollenhoff
(Macmillan; $10.95)

When a reporter asked President Carter what he found most trying as president, Carter replied, "the intransigence of the Congress." The complaint is readily understandable. Until overseas crises brought him surcease, Carter had suffered a prolonged series of crushing defeats and humiliating rebuffs at the hands of a Democratic Congress. They tarnished his reputation, sapped his political power, and wiped out his support in the country. No modern president, unmaimed by scandal or disaster, had ever fallen to a political state as low as Congress had reduced President Carter by the summer of 1979. That record of failure and defeat on Capitol Hill is the most notable feature of the Carter administration, yet it never has been adequately explained. Moreover, it never will be adequately explained as long as political commentators persist in believing that political parties in America no longer matter. Of this there is no better proof than *In The Absence of Power* by Haynes Johnson of the *Washington Post*, whose study of the Carter administration is largely a failed attempt to explain Carter's striking legislative misfortunes.

According to Johnson, the root cause of Carter's disastrous conflict with Congress lies in the nationwide breakdown of "party loyalty, discipline and power," a breakdown so severe and so ominous, Johnson believes, that America today stands in imminent danger of becoming ungovernable. In Congress the collapse of party power has produced an "influx" of legislators "less wedded to party structure" than their predecessors and largely indifferent to the crack of a congressional leader's party whip. According to Johnson, this "new breed" of legislators, though united in nothing else, is dominated by a fixed, "post-Watergate" determination to restore the institutional power of Congress by voting against almost anything that a president might propose. Carter just happened to come along at the wrong time.

Against this resolute determination of disloyal Democrats, the faithful party loyalists in Congress—the Speaker of the House, the Senate majority leader, and other important Democratic legislators—were hapless in their efforts to help Carter gain passage for his bills. Thanks to the breakdown of party discipline in Congress, the "era of the big power broker" is over. The Democratic leadership can no longer deliver as it used to do in the heyday of Sam Rayburn, says Johnson, who seems to have forgotten, so strong is the grip of party mythology, that Rayburn presided over one of the longest legislative stalemates in the history of the United States. Here, then, for Johnson, is one fundamental cause of Carter's legislative misfortunes: the impotence of loyal Democratic legislators—the leadership—in the face of disloyal Democratic newcomers who for two and a half years have harbored no other political object beyond voting against a Democratic president's major bills.

The leading party disloyalist, however, is President Carter himself. Democratic leaders, Johnson assures us, were not especially upset when Carter, the "outsider," filched the presidential nomination from the "party professionals." Although Carter's unprecedented victory "had left bruised egos and wounded vanities," what really angered "key elements" in the Democratic party was Carter's "inept" campaign and his refusal "to use the old party stalwarts." Hostile to the entrenched party leaders, Carter, a president "determined to be different," opened fire against them just five days after his inauguration. At his first critical meeting with Democratic congressional leaders, says Johnson, whose chief source appears to be Tip O'Neill, Carter asked for immediate authority to reorganize the government and "threatened to take his case to the public against them, if they didn't act. Once more O'Neill's voice filled the room. That would be the worst thing you could ever do, he told the President to his face."

Carter launched his second anti-leadership salvo shortly afterward, when he abruptly cut funding for 19 water projects, an act which "stunned and angered the Congress," although most legislators agreed in private that the projects were not worth funding. Carter soon relented on the water projects, as he would relent over just about everything, but the damage was done and it proved irreparable. By early May 1977, relations between Carter and the Democratic leaders had reached "a crisis point, almost," says Johnson, and there it was to remain. Between an "outsider" president hostile to party leaders and a "new breed" of legislators hostile to presidents, the Carter administration was ground to a pulp until the seizure of the US embassy in Iran.

Such is Johnson's explanation of Carter's impotence as a domestic and legislative leader. It is doubtless a fairly familiar one since it is essentially the doctrine that the Washington press corps began putting out around the time Carter's first energy legislation was being mangled by Democrats in the Senate. By propounding it compendiously in the pages of a book, however, Johnson has merely exposed its untenability, for his explanation not only contradicts the facts, it contradicts itself.

The self-contradictions are glaring. Johnson begins by telling us that Democratic leaders in Congress were hostile to Carter even before he entered the White House: "Seldom had a new President come to power amid such sourness and mutterings—and this among key elements of his own party." Having pointed out that salient fact, Johnson then asks us to believe that these same hostile leaders did all in their power to *help* Carter make a successful record in Congress. In other words, we are asked to believe that Carter's harassment at the hands of Congress came about in spite of the fact that the most important Democrats in Congress were personally hostile to him, which is rather like saying that a man fell from a 20th-story window in spite of the fact that he jumped.

A second contradiction intersects the first. Carter's failure, in Johnson's view, stems in large measure from his unwillingness to cooperate with Democratic leaders. The implication of this is obvious. Democratic leaders are powerful men and Carter's defiant conduct turned them into powerful adversaries. This is a perfectly reasonable proposition but it saws off the other leg of Johnson's explanation, namely that the party leaders are not powerful men at all, but rather, loyal and impotent ones; the real opposition to Carter's bills coming from the "new breed" of post-Watergate Democrats whom the "loyal"

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leaders no longer can control. In other words, Carter failed with Congress because he turned powerful men into enemies and he also failed with Congress because these powerful enemies were simultaneously powerless men who tried in vain to help him. Wonders are many but none more wonderful than Democratic leaders who, by Johnson's account, have managed to be powerful and powerless, hostile and loyal all at the very same time.

When, in point of fact, was their loyalty ever manifest? When Carter's popularity stood high, the House of Representatives (the "new breed" notwithstanding) prudently passed his energy legislation, which was, as Johnson rightly remarks, an essentially "tame" piece of legislation. As soon as the Bert Lance fracas weakened Carter politically, however, Senate Democrats pounced on that tame piece of legislation and tore it to shreds. The "new breed" of legislators had nothing to do with it; indeed, the energy bill was kept from the Senate floor to prevent junior senators from voting on its merits. The slaughter of the energy bill, which made screaming headlines for weeks, was entirely the work of leading Democrats. Senator Jackson suddenly became a fanatical defender of "consumers"; Senator Long, a blind zealot for "producers." Lawmakers who had spent a lifetime in politics scratching one another's backs suddenly found themselves incapable of budging an inch, not for days but for weeks and months—at the expense of Carter's bill, his prestige, and his support in the country.

At the same time in the House, Democratic leaders suddenly found themselves unable to pass the weakened president's bill creating a Consumer Protection Agency, although they had had little trouble passing the very same bill *twice before* under two hostile Republican presidents. This, Johnson rightly points out, was "a crushing defeat . . . for the Carter Administration and for Jimmy Carter personally." Personal political injury invariably accompanied Carter's legislative defeats since Democratic leaders "loyally" attributed them to the personal defects of the president. When Carter left a bill in Congress untended, Democratic leaders complained to the press that Carter had not fought for it hard enough. When Carter tried speechifying to rally support for a measure, they complained that he was arrogantly "going over their heads." Carter's bills were lost, said Democrats, because he failed to "work closely" with the leadership. When he worked closely with the leadership he lost, said Democrats, because he offended "liberals" by doing so. When every other pretext failed, Democratic leaders attributed Carter's defeats to the overwhelming power of the lobbyists. When Carter said the same in a speech they assailed him for impugning the honor of Congress. When the "key elements" in the party realized that the "outsider" president was too fearful of undermining public "confidence" by taking his true plight to the people, they did not reward him for protecting them from the voters; they just harried him more brazenly, since from their point of view Carter had merely cast away his only effective weapon against them. If that is a record of "loyalty" it is hard to conceive what hostility would have looked like.

Even Carter's determination "to be different" is grossly exaggerated by Johnson. It was never much to begin with and scarcely lasted three months, if that. *The President Who Failed* by Clark Mollenhoff is a trivial and inconsequent book, but the gravamen of Mollenhoff's charge goes right to this point. Far from being a fiercely independent president and a scourge of old party routines, Carter, in Mollenhoff's view, is a leader who failed in office precisely because of "his eagerness to accommodate all sides." Carter's appointees (the chief subject of Mollenhoff's book) prove him to be a routine, run-of-the mill president

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who, for the usual "expedient" reasons, appointed the the usual bad-penny crop of old Washington fakers, friends of cronies, and conflict-of-interest lobbyists. As Mollenhoff rightly reminds us, Carter even fired a zealous federal attorney, David Marston, at the behest of the corrupt Democrats of Philadelphia, which lowered his stock in the country without raising it with the "party professionals," which was plainly Carter's intention. As an "outsider," President Carter has spent much of his time in office trying to persuade his party that no "insider" president could possibly be more harmless than he. Carter's slavish efforts to accommodate Democratic leaders may have been his fatal mistake as president, but it proves one thing at least: he knows far more about party politics than Haynes Johnson or the rest of the Washington press corps.

The real cause of Carter's failures with Congress stems entirely from one obvious and pregnant fact. He is the first modern president to scale the greasy pole unaided and unwanted by the leaders of his party. This did more than leave "bruised egos," as Johnson lamely assures us. It was nothing less than a stunning defeat for the Democratic party. It meant that for the first time in the party's long history it had failed to meet the principal purpose of a national political party: preventing anyone from becoming America's first magistrate whom the party leaders do not know and trust. That Democratic voters had supported Carter in the nomination campaign largely because party leaders did *not* know and trust him only underscored still further how much political power the Democratic leadership had lost since the early 1960s.

That the Democratic organization had lost power Washington journalists have been telling us for years. That the Democrats were certain, after Carter's election, to try to regain that lost power, no journalist, so far as I know, has ever seen fit to acknowledge. The press apparently operates on the assumption that when a party syndicate loses power the one thing it never will do is try to win it back. Yet that is exactly what we have been witnessing since the election of 1976—a bitter intramural struggle between an outsider president striving to compile a modest record and a party leadership striving to strengthen its party by preventing him from doing just that. The object of the Democrats' strategy—a party strategy commonly practiced on the state level when outsiders won the governorship—is to balk the outsider in the legislature, prevent him from making a record, and thereby "prove" to the voters that electing outsiders will do them no good. By waging war against Carter in Congress, the Democratic leaders, who are loyal indeed to their party, have been trying to "teach" the electorate not to lust after outsiders in the future, presumably in 1984. Only then can the Democrats regain control of their most important nomination and with it a measure of their waning power.

How well the voters have learned that self-serving party "lesson" is attested, perhaps, by a man from Boone, Iowa, quoted by Johnson. In 1976, said the Iowan, an "outsider" president was just what he wanted. "What I'm looking for now," he told Johnson in mid-1979, "is a stronger, older, ward-politician type." Exactly the point of the Democrats' strategy. Johnson's explanation of Carter's congressional defeats is, in truth, little more than the party line put out by Democratic leaders to disguise the awkward fact that they have been "educating" the American people at the American people's expense.

Walter Karp

Walter Karp is a political writer whose latest book is *The Politics of War* (Harper & Row).

Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas by Isaiah Berlin

(Viking; $16.95)

With the publication of this volume almost all of Isaiah Berlin's essays are at last available. Lucid, learned, a pleasure to read and reread, they are also unique because they are the work of both the philosopher's and the historian's art. Anglo-American intellectual decorum decrees that analytical philosophy and psychology be rigidly separated, that the coherence of ideas be treated in complete isolation from their historical and emotional character. Berlin, who is a remarkable intuitive psychologist as well as a careful dissector of concepts, has found a perfect way to jump over these barriers into the history of ideas. Here he can escape from the narrow confines of philosophy without losing its clarity of mind. The history of ideas, like all history, is the art of constructing an intelligible whole out of the bits and pieces of evidence left to us by people very different from us yet recognizably human like ourselves. "It seeks to provide as complete an account as it can of what men do and suffer," as Berlin puts it. That applies particularly well to the history of men of letters. To do justice to their thinking, however, also requires a philosopher's skill at defining and illuminating complex concepts.

Precision, in any case, is absolutely essential to Berlin's whole intellectual enterprise. For his main aim is to show that our moral ends, such as liberty, justice, equality, harmony, charity, cooperation, and knowledge cannot be reduced to a "single perfect whole." They are ineluctably dissimilar and often in mutual conflict. Unlike many egalitarian thinkers, Berlin recognizes, for example, that poor people want to be free as well as yearn for more equality. Like the rich, they may often be forced to choose one or the other, since that possibility is inherent in the very structure of our moral life. To this logic of pluralism must be added the diversity of human types. Berlin, like Locke, rejoices in the fact that "we have our understandings no less different than our palates." He even seems to believe that as long as we openly disagree our intellectual life is sure to flourish. That is not a particularly convincing suggestion, but it is characteristic of the rather upbeat tone of most of his writings. To his credit, Berlin does more than celebrate this state of moral multiplicity. He has investigated and fenced off many of its members.

As a historian he has in some of these essays tried to establish the pedigree of moral pluralism. His portraits of such great precursors as Vico, Montesquieu, and Herder do not tell us anything new about them, but they are elegant and technically accomplished. Their one major defect is the besetting sin of intellectual historians, lists of names. "Spener, Francke, Bengel" are followed by "Lenz, Klinger, Gerstenberg and

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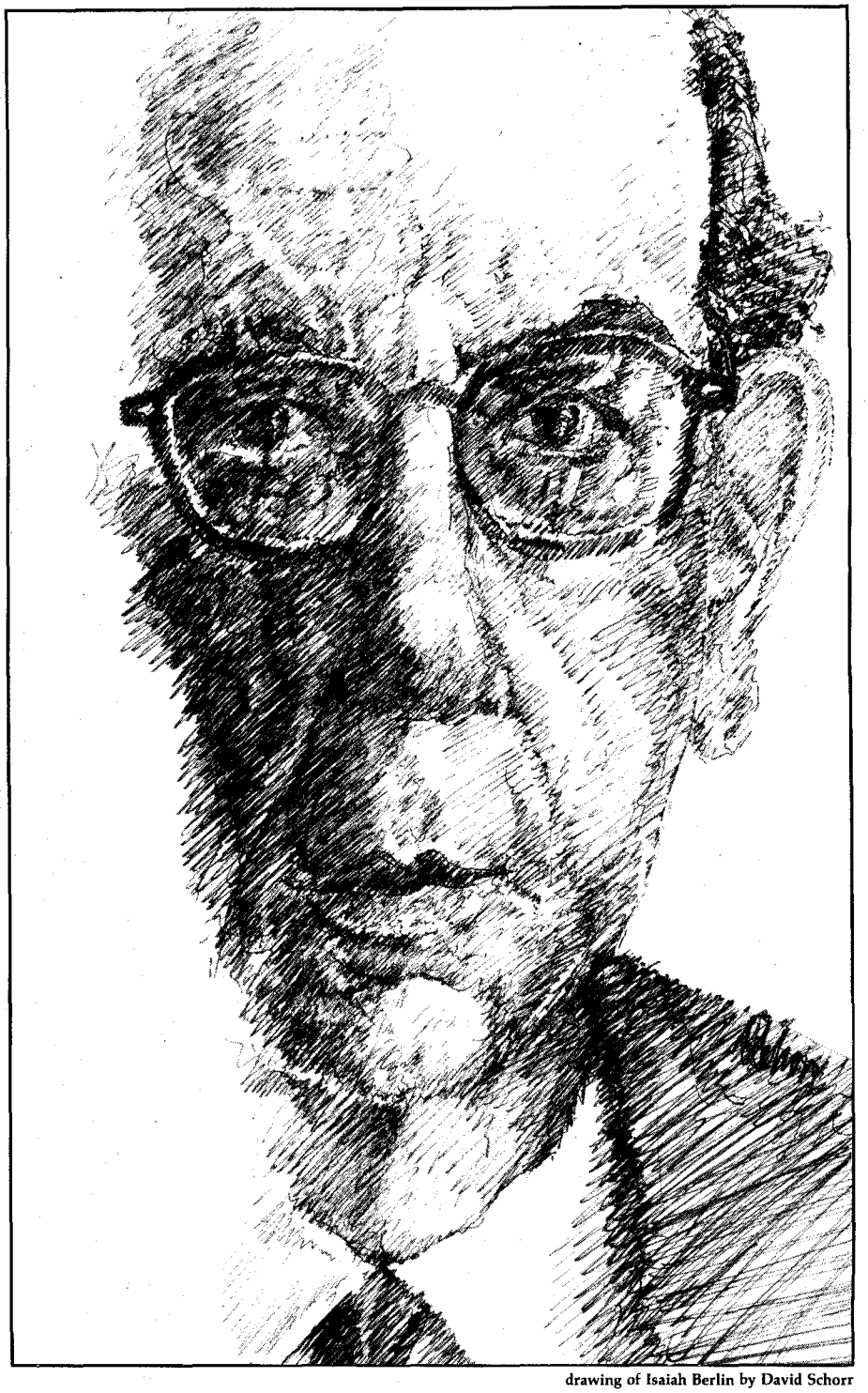
Leisewitz" who, in turn, are succeeded by "Muralt, Bodmer, Beitinger, Lowth, Blackwell, and the Wartons, father and son." Some are so long they seem almost to acquire a rhythm. This, however, is a minor flaw in the best of these essays which rehabilitate half-remembered writers whom most reasonable people would find utterly exasperating, such as Johann Hamann, Moses Hess, and even Alexander Herzen.

The first was an 18th-century German seer who paradoxically managed to use Hume's rational skepticism as a justification for his own flights of faith. Hess was a maddeningly idealistic Communist, who unaccountably was right about the future of the Jews. Finally, there are several essays about the founder of Russian socialism, Herzen, whom Berlin obviously loves, even though he has come to recognize the colossal egotism and vanity of his hero. Still, he soft-pedals Herzen's fantasies about the natural socialism of the Russian village communes and his rather hysterical rhetoric about the coming revolt of the masses. All is forgiven because Herzen understood the necessity of moral choice and because he really was a moral survivor. Berlin's admiration is probably quite just, but then, he is fair to everyone. In this, Berlin is remote from Tolstoy, who is the subject of his famous essay, "The Hedgehog and the Fox," but he does resemble Turgenev, whose "irony, tolerant scepticism and lack of passion" he has noted in a wonderful lecture.

This is not an ideal temper for understanding Machiavelli, and the essay devoted to him is neither consistent nor convincing. Berlin proposes to explain once and for all why Machiavelli has always outraged his readers. To Berlin, Machiavelli was the writer who first revealed that there could be at least two perfect but totally incompatible forms of life, the pagan and the Christian. To have shown us this profoundly upsetting truth was his major sin.

The trouble with this view is that the possibility of several disparate ethics is not particularly terrifying. D'Alembert counted at least five moralities and Max Weber, in our own century, insisted on three, a political ethic of consequences, the Sermon on the Mount, and an ethic for scientists. To lose one's soul for the sake of one's country has long been an admired form of heroism, and if this were all that Machiavelli had said he never would have worried anyone. In fact, however, he goes well beyond the platitudes of patriotic bombast. First of all, he did not think that moral dualism was at all necessary. It was a social curse imposed by Christianity. In pagan antiquity citizens did not have to make such awful choices. Everyone was wholly political. It is only in decadent societies that people have these moral alternatives, and Machiavelli never doubted which one was superior. Christianity was fine for those poor slobs who live only for sex and property, but political men must take the high road to pagan fame.

This was surely shocking when it was written, but that is not why Machiavelli's vision of politics remains so disturbing. It is, rather, his picture of politics-as-perpetual-war that is still frightening. Statesmen have only two choices: either they must fight expansive wars, or be subjugated by more aggressive powers. War is the necessary condition of life between states, and it also sets the pattern for domestic politics. The Romans, with their perpetual brutalities and deceits and their appalling mass punishments fully understood that. Machiavelli asks us to admire the Romans because they alone understood the logic of war. That Machiavelli may be right about all this is not the least of the reasons why he can



drawing of Isaiah Berlin by David Schorr

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still make us uneasy. It is an anxiety his modern heirs, the revolutionary doctrinaires of perpetual war, do nothing to quell. Lenin and Sorel certainly have made Machiavelli relevant; and it is too bad that in his essay on Sorel Berlin cannot even see the traces of Machiavelli.

There are then good reasons to worry about Machiavelli, but his two moralities are not among them. Berlin's picture of Machiavelli also suffers from constantly shifting and confused descriptions. That is because Berlin does not seem to realize that there are two quite different versions of moral pluralism. The first of these, proposed by many political thinkers, most notably Machiavelli and Max Weber, is a theory of social roles. Every social role, it is said, has its distinct and appropriate ethic. An ethic of responsible calculation for politicians, an ethic of originality for artists, an ethic of honesty for scholars, and an ethic of altruism for saints. The greater the division of labor the more ethics there would be. This view can inspire cool realism in politics, but also heroic bravado, and worst of all a destructive urge to return to some imagined state of oneness. The other version of moral pluralism, which is Berlin's own, does not depend on sociological considerations. It assumes that the insuperable diversity of moral ends is inherent in our psychic economy, or in our language, or in fate, or in God's inscrutable design. It may call us to see ourselves as we really are, but it can also lead to some posturing and to the worship of authenticity. It has, however, nothing to do with Machiavelli and only confuses Berlin's picture of the man's mind.

The "deep" multiplicity of values that Berlin and the existentialists propose, which puts a premium on personal choice, is not politically irrelevant. It is designed to underwrite the liberalism of both strong personalities bent on self-development and weak ones who, faced with too many options, collapse into anomie. Both need a well-defined space where no one can bully them, which is Berlin's definition of freedom. As his real predecessor, Benjamin Constant, foresaw, any effort to make such men cooperate or join in common enterprise would require endless coercion and propaganda and would only turn them into organized hordes of predators. Nevertheless, both Constant and Berlin know perfectly well that the loss of willpower and self-orientation that can afflict people who are overburdened by choices can end in disaster. The distracted hero of Constant's great novel, *Adolphe*, is a free man, but in the end he commits suicide. There is, as Berlin says, a basic "need to belong," and he explains it very carefully in his essays on Herder and modern nationalism. But he may, perhaps, not be ready to accept that "belonging" greatly reduces our choices. Being "outside," if one can bear it, has its advantages.

It is, therefore, not altogether surprising that one of Berlin's most interesting pieces is a lacerating meditation on Jewish self-hatred, the outsider's chronic disease. Emancipated Jews often hate themselves, because the people around them dislike them and show it, not always violently, but quite overtly nonetheless. One escape from this situation is simply to pretend not to be a Jew. It is, of course, not easy to renounce one's parents, and in any case, only rats want to leave a perpetually sinking ship. Certainly this is no way to recover one's self-esteem. Another avenue to self-avoidance is to spin aristocratic fantasies about oneself and one's ancestors. That is what Benjamin Disraeli did. As Berlin reveals him to us, he appears to have created not only a false past for his own family, but also a crazy aristocratically racial one for all Jews. Hopelessly in love with the English aristocracy, he was a manipulative actor of genius who did, in fact, manage to lead and dominate those whom he so desperately idealized. Yet anti-Semitism hounded him every day of his life. That is why he had to boast so tastelessly about the glories of his own racial past, since he could not possibly deny it. Berlin thinks that his policies were "deeply reactionary and dangerous," but forgives him his many poses because he was sincere, especially in his eccentric brand of Christianity. It is hardly obvious, however, that sincerity improves such bad policy. Perhaps his lush racial vaporings should not be treated too harshly. They were the platitudes of his day and he could not foresee how they sound to us. The moral of *Sybil*, that there was a national bond between the landed aristocracy and the working classes, was just as commonplace a fancy, and hardly Disraeli's own invention. The real trouble with Disraeli, it seems to me, is that he was the ultimate court Jew. This model of how to be a Jew has not lost all its tacky glamour, and one wishes Berlin had said even more about it.

The court Jew, as a social type, identifies himself with whatever upper class he may encounter, and does so in the hope of overcoming his despised, actual self. As a cure for self-hatred this is pure poison. All that flattering,

THE BEAVER POOL IN DECEMBER

The brook is still open
where the water falls,
but over the deeper pools
clear ice forms; over the dark
shapes of stones, a rotting log,
and amber leaves that clattered down
after the first heavy frost.

Though I wait in the cold
until dusk, and though a sudden
bubble of air rises under the ice,
I see not a single animal.

The beavers thrive somewhere
else, eating the bark of hoarded
saplings. How they struggled
to pull the long pieces
over the stiffening bank . . .

but now they pass without
effort, all through the chilly
water; moving like thoughts
in an unconflicted mind.

Jane Kenyon

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fawning, entertaining, and self-deceiving can only irritate an already inflamed wound. (One thinks with a mixture of pity and disdain of all those clever young Jews fluttering around Justice Holmes.) It is also poor policy, for there is no safety up there. For every tolerant *grand seigneur* there are a dozen uppercrust bigots.

Why then do so many talented and able Jews acquire these useless and self-defeating habits? Why will they risk their personal honor to imagine that they are Athenian heroes, or English gentlemen, or Boston Brahmins, or anything except what they are, middle-class Jews? In his reflections on Disraeli and Marx, Berlin offers some answers and suggests more. Because they hate themselves, many Jews hate their social origins. In every generation since their emancipation, there have been many who simply could not face the prospect of becoming dry-goods merchants or usurers. The liberal professions offered a morally acceptable way out. But for some even this option is inadequate, for they crave an aristocratic ethos of honor as a substitute for a despised bourgeois rectitude. Rampant in all European societies and even in America, these aspirations were simply absorbed in the general process of assimilation. Zionism once owed much to them, in all fairness, and to give the aristocratic political imagination its due. But the role of the court Jew is psychologically fatal, nevertheless, since it ensures both personal insecurity and pubic disgrace. For the court Jew does not say "no" to anti-Semitism, he says "no" to himself as a Jew.

All this becomes clear enough when one remembers Karl Marx. As Berlin says, he was "a revolting" and "vulgar" anti-Semite. But he was not "Disraeli's diametrical opposite." Disraeli dreamed of protecting the working class against the bourgeoisie as part of a general *noblesse oblige* fantasy. Marx did not identify himself with the actual working class either, but with "the proletariat" whom he endowed with all those characteristics that have always been attributed to the hereditary nobility, especially class solidarity and martial vigor and devotion. This was the crusading host that he and others as alienated as himself would lead in a war that would obliterate the past. In the person of Trotsky this heroic scenario of self-hatred was played out to its blood-soaked end. But what is reprehensible about this ideology of resentment is not the fate of its individual followers nor, as Berlin rather mildly notes, that its predictions were fatally wrong. It was, in fact, from the first an expression of the will to power, always inherent in the aristocratic consciousness, venting all its pent-up frustrations upon ordinary men and women. To be sure, Jews are by no means the only people to fabricate political nightmares, but now one wishes that we had never conceived any at all.

If one cares, as Berlin so obviously does, about how one behaves as part of a group, about such values as loyalty and personal honor, then one must accept the fact that in actual life our moral choices are not unlimited and that we more often have to select nuances rather than bold aims. That seems to me to have been more implied than said in some of these essays. Their wealth of suggestions is perhaps their greatest distinction. Berlin never imposes himself on his readers. True to his convictions, and with characteristic generosity, he has put before us an array of intellectual possibilities which we are free to rethink, develop, and, especially, to dispute. He deserves nothing less.

Judith N. Shklar

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Prize Stories 1980: The O. Henry Awards edited by William Abrahams

(Doubleday; $12.95)

This is the 60th annual O. Henry Prize volume, a fact which, in an era of ephemera in the arts (as elsewhere), should count for a great deal. It is also the 14th volume that William Abrahams has edited by himself (from 1964 to 1966 he assisted and co-edited the series with Richard Poirier). That the 1980 *Prize Stories* is the strongest—or at any rate one of the very strongest—of all the volumes I have been perusing is a testimony not only to the imagination and increasing technical skill of American short story writers, but to the continued diligence and good taste of Abrahams himself. Having given so many awards to so many writers since 1966, perhaps Abrahams is due for some sort of award himself?

There are anthologies that are mere assemblages of work, thrown together in order to demonstrate something of historical or sociological interest; there are anthologies that advance certain aesthetic polemics, ruthless in their omissions; there are anthologies that, in attempting to touch all bases, satisfy all possible objections, diffuse themselves in blandness. From the very start of his editorship of this series, William Abrahams has done a superb job of putting together a volume of short fiction that both justifies itself as a self-contained work of art, and manages to represent the kind of fiction being published in the United States. (A vertiginous labor: it is informally estimated that some 1500 short stories were published in American magazines last year. And William Abrahams, unlike the editor of the rival *The Best American Short Stories* volume, makes the claim that the choice of stories is exclusively the responsibility of the editor—no first reader or assistant is named.)

Though the annual O. Henry volume usually makes a gesture toward the timely (in 1965 it was social commentary, in 1972 it was the defiant stance of "individualism," in 1980 it appears to be the "problem" of women—a problem investigated with remarkable subtlety) it may be noted that the editor's bias is fairly conservative: there is little experimental work here, nothing that—to use Flannery O'Connor's expression—"looks funny on the page." In the 1960s and 1970s the form of the short story seemed to undergo tremendous changes, either exciting or self-destructive depending upon one's aesthetic preferences. The well-chiseled "literary" story was challenged by stories that were not stories at all but "fictions"—which is to say, simply not non-fiction; one came upon Beckett-like monologues, Borgesian commentaries, coy and elusive, on non-existing sub-

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jects, and resolutely unlinear "concrete" prose that might resemble, at first or even second glance, crossword puzzles or doodlings. Abrahams dealt with the phenomenon by ignoring it, for the most part; or by choosing experimental writers with a distinctly Modernist style (Barthelme, for one, long before he became famous). If his fairly rigorous exclusion of these self-conscious fictions disappointed or angered some readers, it nevertheless seems, in retrospect, that his judgment was sound. For nothing dates so rapidly as experimental work of the less-than-first-rate, and Abrahams's editorial instincts led him to choose stories that would read as well many years later as at the time of publication. There seems to me very little that isn't viable as art in the O. Henry volumes since 1966, and much that remains outstanding despite the comparative (and surprising) failure to achieve fame of certain gifted writers. (Among them Eunice Luccock Corfman, Brock Brower, Leonard Wolf, James Salter, and Robert Hemenway—each the author of excellent stories.)

The current volume includes famous names, writing at the top of their form: Saul Bellow, whose masterly reminiscence of the death of an aged father, "A Silver Dish," was judged by Abrahams the best of the year (surely a judgment no one would contest); the late Jean Stafford, whose presumably autobiographical "An Influx of Poets" is as witty and despairing a piece as Stafford ever wrote; and Peter Taylor, whose leisurely yet suspenseful "The Old Forest" broods upon a curious incident that occurred in Memphis in 1937. Alice Adams, a mainstay of the series (she has appeared now in 10 O. Henry volumes and may soon have to retire gracefully from competition), tells an irresistibly appealing anecdote, also a reminiscence, involving two "misfits" in her seventh-grade class. (Is the most powerful mode of the short story finally reminiscence in its many forms? Having little space to create a world, the writer addresses the reader directly and conversationally, perhaps even in confidence. Of course there is artfulness but it is oblique and skillfully hidden.)

It is a feature of the O. Henry volume that prizes are awarded, and here the editor's choices must seem rather arbitrary. Why is Leonard Michaels's grimly funny tale of male frustration "The Men's Club" inferior to Nancy Hallinan's comparatively tame "Women in a Roman Courtyard"?—why is John L'Heureux's "The Priest's Wife: Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" presumably inferior to both? Ranking writers is hard and unrewarding, as Abrahams surely knows, for what precisely is one ranking? Subject matter? — technique? — originality? — genius? With one or two exceptions everyone in the volume has attained, perhaps precociously, a certain technical skill: the stories are well told, and worth telling. Perhaps there were other equally good stories published in 1979 but that is not the point, for an editor *must* select, and selection means exclusion. It has been a curious fact of literary life for some years now that the general level of writing—of technical proficiency—has been extraordinarily high, and may even be rising; in addition to being an electronic age, this is also a highly self-conscious literary age—for a small but stubborn minority. Abrahams is certainly right in saying in his introduction that the accessibility of worthwhile stories to readers who would welcome them if they knew of their existence is "a more serious problem than the quality and number of stories that are being written." The O. Henry volume usually includes contributions from small magazines—this year, *Antaeus, Fiction, Canto, Hudson Review, Yankee, The North American Review,* and *Shenandoah,* a generous selection—but its mainstays are, of course, *The New Yorker, Esquire, Harper's,* and *Atlantic.* Readers interested in discovering what goes on in *really* small, experimental magazines are advised to consult the annual *Pushcart Prize* anthologies, which publish the "best of the small presses."

Outstanding in this volume, in addition to the stories already mentioned, are Gail Godwin's adroit parable "Amanuensis: A Tale of the Creative Life" (from *Cosmopolitan,* a magazine rarely represented in such anthologies); Ann Beattie's muted "The Cinderella Waltz"; Robert Dunn's low-keyed "Hopeless Acts Performed Properly, With Grace"; Barry Targan's "Old Light"; and Helen Chasin's droll "Fatal" (from—of all places —*The New Republic*). One may well come away from the volume remembering the conclusion of Leonard Michaels's story, when the men's club sublimates its sexual despair by an eating orgy (they devour a feast prepared for a women's group); one is likely to recall the inexplicable flight of the demimondaine in Peter Taylor's tale; or the forthright opening of Bellow's superb story, which leads us into the Chicago of which Augie March spoke so lyrically and ambitiously decades ago:

> What do you do about death—in this case, the death of an old father? If you're a modern person . . . and a man who's been around . . . what do you do? Take this matter of mourning, and take it against a contemporary background. How . . . do you mourn an octogenarian father, nearly blind, his heart enlarged, his lungs filled with liquid, who creeps, stumbles, gives off the odors, the moldiness or gassiness of old men. I *mean*! As Woody put it, be realistic. Think what times these are. The papers daily give it to you. . . . We know now what goes daily through the whole of the human community, like a global death-peristalsis.

As Abrahams says: "I would like to think that the stories gathered here sustain [an] argument: surely a year that offers an achievement of the caliber of Bellow's story . . . is reason enough for optimism as to the future."

Joyce Carol Oates

Unloving Care: The Nursing Home Tragedy
by Bruce C. Vladeck
A Twentieth Century Fund Study

(Basic Books; $13.95)

So many scandals have erupted in so many sectors of American society over the past decade that we are in danger of becoming bored with them. The exposé is the trademark of our times, whether it involves funeral directors, Watergate burglars, ABSCAM victims, or nursing home shysters. Yet it is not only the frequency of scandals but the ways that they surface and are responded to that breed cynicism and fatigue. Journalists have played a preeminent role in un-

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covering the scandals, and while their energy and persistence have been admirable, their accounts generally focus on personalities; their hall of ill fame is cluttered with the John Mitchells and the Bernard Bergmans. But whether for reasons of principle or, more likely, to sell newspapers, journalists reduce scandals to bad guys doing bad things, succumbing to a lust for money and power. The result is a morality play. The problem with American institutions becomes the problem of original sin.

Legislators' reactions, as well as those of many investigatory committees and policy analysts, frequently reinforce this air of resignation. That nothing works, that failure is built into the political process, that innovation is impossible—all have become fashionable laments. Here and there piecemeal proposals emerge to tighten, say, fiscal regulations, or to improve the characters of businessmen or politicians (variations on the theme of the warden who, pressed to explain the horrors of his prison, said he never would be able to run a better system until he received a better class of inmates). Conventional wisdom would have it that the next scandal is only a breath away, awaiting the next reporter who happens upon a good story.

Such views are depressing not only because they become self-fulfilling—a do-nothing attitude is a guarantee that corruption will reappear—but because scandals might well be energizing. They might serve as catalysts for restructuring policy, or at least for understanding the roots of a problem and devising alternatives. Historians often have remarked that they benefit from war: first the losers' archives are opened, and then the winners (in self-defense) must open theirs. The scandal may fulfill this same purpose: from the Watergate tapes to the Bergman nursing home accounts, judges and prosecutors serve as excellent research assistants.

The nursing home scandals have produced first-rate reports, most notably that of the 1976 Moreland Commission in New York—which together with that of the Attica Commission are the exceptions to the rule of dull, whitewashing committee work. But however much Bruce Vladeck has gained from other investigations, his *Unloving Care* is a fresh and significant contribution to understanding the political processes that have shaped the nursing home industry. More, his insights into nursing homes have immediate relevance to social policy in many related areas, from deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill and retarded to health and welfare programs generally.

The key to the nursing home failures is found first in the fact that policymakers never directly confronted the issue of nursing homes. Their concerns were with either welfare programs or health programs; the nursing homes were always a sideshow. The story opens in the 1930s. The Social Security Act looked to abolish the almshouse, whose clientele were the aged infirm without relatives or friends, essentially the nursing home population of today. Since the Act aimed to support the needy in the community, it prohibited funds from going to inmates of state or county almshouses. The result, altogether unintended, was to spur the growth of small, mom-and-pop-owned and operated nursing homes, whose clients could receive and then turn over their social security stipends.

The transformation of the relatively few proprietary nursing homes into an industry occurred in 1965 with the passage of Medicaid legislation. Vladeck's fascinating account of the process of change resists easy summary, but a few highlights can be noted: first, some alternatives to lengthy stays in costly acute care facilities seemed fiscally prudent and appropriate; convalescent or chronic care could take place in less intensive settings. Second, neither the state nor the voluntary agencies wanted to assume greater responsibility for the disabled; it seemed a losing assignment. At the same time, a group of real estate operators saw an opportunity to gain access to capital funds for nursing home construction from the Small Business Administration and the Federal Housing Administration; and more, their facilities could come under the very liberal tax write-off and billing provisions that the hospitals enjoyed. Hence, the profits reaped by the most scrupulous operators were high, while those reaped by the less scrupulous were staggering. Quickly enough, private bankers were ready to enlarge the kitty, recognizing that nursing home operators could not possibly lose money.

The scope of the embezzlements and the inadequacies of the care quickly brought scandal to the industry. Still, for reasons that Vladeck makes clear, ameliorative efforts were woefully inadequate. The New York Moreland Commission predicted that even if all its recommendations were enacted, another Moreland investigation still would be needed within a decade. Like an end game in chess, reformers keep trying to trap the king but invariably an escape route appears.

Take the seemingly straightforward issue of reimbursement. Should the government set a flat rate (so much per day per client) or a cost plus "reasonable" profit rate? If the reimbursement rate is fixed in advance, the operator has the incentive to cut costs to maximize profits; every dollar saved by scrimping on food, staff, and clothing is a dollar in his pocket. The flat rate also encourages operators to admit the least difficult clients and to keep them as long as possible—since they are the cheapest to maintain. Then why not shift to a cost-plus accounting? For then operators have every incentive to order expensive equipment which gathers dust in a storeroom or to enter into illicit arrangements with physicians to prescribe services that are neither necessary nor actually provided. A cost-plus arrangement gives operators every reason to let costs spiral and to maximize expenditures. So, whatever the formula, the nursing home operator wins.

The game continues, but always with the same outcome. If administrative regulations insist that facilities employ registered nurses, then operators turn licensed nurses into registered nurses. If administrative regulations attempt to distinguish between intensive supervision in more expensive settings (Skilled Nursing Facilities, or SNFs as they are called) and less intensive supervision in more modest settings (Intermediate Care Facilities, the ICFs) then states with high-quality ICFs make them SNFs. And of course since reimbursement rates are higher for SNF clients, operators, in conjunction with physicians, have an incentive to label all their clients SNF clients, regard-

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less of their disabilities.

Clearly administrative regulations will not solve the problems. But tough inspections and rigorous penalties also have failed miserably. In part it proved impossible to lay down enforceable standards: how can you write a code that measures appetizing food? In part it proved impossible to carry out on-site inspections, either because funds were not available for inspectors' salaries, or because the operators always knew the date of inspection and so, for once, stocked the refrigerator and changed the sheets, or because incompetent residents were unable to testify, and competent residents were intimidated from testifying. But most important, the sanctions that could be levied against the violators were too weak. Why attempt to revoke a licensing certificate if it appeared that no other facility was available to take over client care, or if the ensuing court hearings would stretch out for months or even years? The only standard that has been met is the life safety code. The technical requirements for preventing fires are explicit; the operators are afraid of facing criminal charges if their clients burn; and judges are ready to act quickly if such a risk is present. Life-safety, however, is the exception that proves the rule. The aged cannot be burned to death, but they can suffer and die from slow neglect and steady abuse.

Given this grim record, it is not surprising that Vladeck's recommendations are probably more visionary than practical. Unlike most investigators, his major concern is not with cost accountability but with reducing nursing home populations. Reformers usually have tried to devise a new funding formula: for example, they suggest calculating the average cost of good nursing home care and then imposing that rate on all nursing homes—which, in effect, is setting a flat rate that operators will meet by scrimping on services. Vladeck breaks out of this mold by dividing the nursing home clientele into categories and insisting that at least half of them could be served elsewhere. The acute cases (some 10 percent of the present population) who will either recover or die within a relatively short period, should be allowed to remain in general hospitals (which now, after all, have a surplus of beds). The disabled with some independent living capabilities (about 40 percent of the population) should reside in some form of congregate housing or receive services within the community. The hard-core cases (half of the population) would have to remain in nursing homes—but a dramatic cut-back in the number of beds might benefit them as well. The reduction that Vladeck proposes would take place by eliminating the worst of the nursing homes, and more, he is confident that greater community involvement with the facilities and a keener exercise of professional review would improve conditions substantially.

Vladeck has located the right dynamic: so long as nursing home beds are available in number and allowed to increase without limit, so long will alternatives be foreclosed and abuses persist. Like so many other incarcerative institutions, nursing homes not only fail to deliver acceptable service but dominate the system and thus close off options. Evil then becomes not merely banal but seemingly unavoidable—and we grow reconciled to more scandals.

Vladeck is not unaware of the barriers to effecting change, such as the length of time it would take to close a low-ranking facility. But the prospects may be even more difficult than he imagines, for he consistently, and not at all persuasively, minimizes the political influence of the nursing home operators. His analysis here is the weakest part of the book, hypothetical rather than factual, an outsider's account of the bad image that nursing home operators have, not an insider's account of lobbying efforts and legislative responses. The Moreland Commission, for its part, came away far more impressed with operators' political influence, and Vladeck offers no substantive evidence to refute its view, or indeed, the view that runs through such muckraking accounts as Mary Mendelson's *Tender Loving Greed*.

So if you are going to have fantasies about change, why not couple Vladeck's goal of reducing nursing home populations by half with the goal of driving out the proprietaries and leaving the field to the voluntary agencies or the state itself? Vladeck is not convinced that the not-for-profit sector has done much better at providing care. He insists that the quality of facilities generally follows a bell curve, with the not-for-profit facilities a few degrees over to the quality side. The very best nursing homes are run by voluntary agencies; the very worst by the proprietaries; but mediocrity predominates in both sectors. Vladeck's account, however, is highly impressionistic and based on "interviews," which, in the most egregious methodological fault of his book, he does not attribute or date. It is true that if for-profit nursing homes were outlawed, then operators might well establish not-for-profit homes and purchase all of their supplies from their own dummy corporations at handsome profit; as for state-operated homes, the poster that reputedly hangs in Ted Kennedy's Senate office tells the story: "If you like the United States Postal Service, you'll love National Health Insurance." Still, if one were going to take on the critical task of reducing beds, of substituting quality for quantity, then what better campaign to mount than to get the delivery of human services out of the profit-making business altogether?

A point Vladeck hints at demands fuller consideration. Much of the nursing home fiasco is the result of our grossly inadequate welfare programs. Legislators devised and still maintain such flimsy categories as SNFs and ICFs to keep down the number of poor who will feed fully or comfortably at the public trough. Our nursing homes are the products of a mentality that uses disease to distinguish the worthy from the unworthy poor. If such a distinction were lacking, families might look to the state to support their aged and needy parents; even worse, the aged who lack other resources and find the social security sums too meager to live on might also turn to public relief. At times one even suspects that the foul character of so many nursing homes is far from unintended. Just as the almshouse had to be worse than the slum, so the nursing homes must be worse than the conditions for the most marginal of the aged. In sum, if all of the elderly were supported in dignity, with stipends enabling them to purchase necessary services, many nursing homes might well be eliminated—but then we would run the risk of welfare chiselers instead of nursing home chiselers, and that seems unacceptable. When nursing home operators arrive at their conventions with Cadillacs, no one thinks to write lyrics about it. That feat of imagination is reserved for those on welfare.

Vladeck reminds us of the price we

Coming:
Clifford Geertz on
The Forbidden Experiment.

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pay for these preferences. And perhaps, if the question is framed sharply enough, the answer will change. After all, it is more likely that any one of us will reach 75, suffer a disability, and lack resources and kin than it is that we will grow up to become nursing home operators.

David J. Rothman

David J. Rothman, professor of history at Columbia University, is the author of the recently published *Conscience and Convenience: The Asylum and its Alternatives in Progressive America* (Little, Brown.)

Brief Reviews

The Bleeding Heart by Marilyn French

(Summit Books; $12.95)

The heroine of Marilyn French's new novel is a bleeding heart because she weeps for all womankind. Like Mira, the narrator/protagonist of French's best-selling *The Women's Room*, Dolores feels as though she has swallowed the lives of every woman she has known, and merged their pain with her own. Her work reflects her life: a professor of literature on leave in England, she is writing a book entitled *Lot's Wife: The Identification of Women With Suffering*. Lot's wife was turned to salt when she could not forbear from looking back at her world in flames; Dolores endures an emotional petrification because of her obsession with the ghosts of her past and the collective past.

A compendium of voices and stories, *The Women's Room* blazed with anger at the multiplicity of betrayals that were women's fate: its women were undercut by their own weaknesses, their men, and a society that fashioned itself from a set of pernicious, patriarchal myths. The book drew its drama and its politics from both the mundane dailyness of women's lives and women's capacity to deal with what French called the "shit and string beans" and survive to tell their tales. I *The Women's Room*, no man was seen fro the inside out; the husbands and lov who stalked through the novel inflict damage on women were never m than stick figures, by the author's admission. Despite—or because of deliberate omission, the reality the boo conjured was so intense that if you were female it was difficult to finish *The Women's Room* without wanting to kill, castrate, or at least maim a few men.

The Bleeding Heart represents an effort to move beyond the vengefulness of *The Women's Room*, to set out a model for a new, high way of love. Rather than groping toward a feminist anger, it begins there, with a protagonist who identifies love with loss of selfhood. It goes on to ask whether anything good and clean can emerge from the Sodom and Gomorrah of outmoded relations between the sexes—whether in a world where pain is constant and justice impossible, love can, in fact, conquer all.

Dolores meets Victor first in her dreams; he is the fragile answer to her need to be taken care of, to be lured from absorption in herself, her friends, and her work. Their initial union is violent, lyrical, wordless—a dream indeed. From that point, *The Bleeding Heart* divides into two principal narrative modes: a seemingly endless debate between Dolores and Victor, a married business executive in England for the year, about the responsibility of men for all the world's troubles; and the lovers' personal stories, their account of the people and events that have contributed in each to a combination of yearning and bitterness.

For all French's power as a weaver of tales and her mastery of language and structure, *The Bleeding Heart* falters on several counts. It tends, first of all, to be overly polemical; the rhetoric of militant feminism hovers as a tangible, often overwhelming distraction from the play of situ and character. After all, we alread to French and her fellov a woman "is to b on, with the Naz ere. To be a wo l is to be an ou thing new or pa mpt to introduce to her female- rld is doomed by of her suspicion ex. Seeing Victor in first time, Dolores vas a face "that had " she asks herself in a of upper-middle-class y, "did you see that in a pain is evident in his riven life and a failed it is never so marked as he, like his counterparts in *Room*, manages to impose on r all of which French holds him ely accountable.

But *The Bleeding Heart*'s most notable weakness is not political, but literary. French departs from the jagged realism that served her so smoothly in her first novel to indulge here in a heavy-handed exercise in symbolism. In the process, she permits drama to lapse into melodrama. Dolores's miserable first husband is not simply shattered by their divorce; he literally destroys himself, and Dolores's troubled older daughter follows suit. As for Victor, his hapless helpmeet is not just emotionally crippled by her role as the perpetual child-wife; she actually loses both her legs in a accident, and holds a guilty Victor captive from her wheelchair with all the passive-aggressive flair of which the dependent are capable. It's not that so much tragedy is not "true to life"; families exist that suffer this much and more. It's just that the revelation of misfortune on top of misfortune is too much for French's art to bear.

This avalanche of catastrophes does not undermine the cautious optimism which is the novel's final message and the main indication that French indeed has moved beyond the splendid isolation of Mira in *The Women's Room*. Men and women in *The Bleeding Heart* continue to be bound to the wreckage of the past, while averting their eyes fearfully before the demands of the future. But there remains for them a single sanctuary: a possibility for "felicitous life"—French's vision of utopia—gained by snatching pleasure where one can, from the tenuousness of love in the present, the only time for which it can be promised.

Julia M. Klein

Julia M. Klein is a freelance writer and reviewer.

Moscow Diary by Veljko Mićunović translated by David Floyd introduction by George Kennan

(Doubleday: $15.95)

In this frequently touching memoir Veljko Mićunović gives a lively portrait of men and events inside the Kremlin during the critical period from March 1956 to October 1958, when he was

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Yugoslavia's ambassador to the USSR. Mićunović combines in his highly readable *Diary* both the flavor of immediacy and the wry humor of a detached and fair-minded observer.

Mićunović needed to be fair-minded, and quick-witted as well, for as Tito's man in Moscow he had to perform a delicate balancing act during and after the Hungarian uprising of 1956, a time when the Russians were willing to do almost anything to bring Yugoslavia, which broke away from the Soviet bloc in 1948, back inside the fold. Thus they withheld long-promised credits for a much-needed aluminum plant, requiring Tito to sign statements of ideological conformity as their price. They attempted to buy two members of the Yugoslavia Politburo—including Lazar Kolisevski, Tito's current interim heir—by leaving huge stacks of rubles in their Moscow hotel room. And when a low-level Belgrade official complained about a third-place award to a Yugoslav choir during a Moscow choral competition in 1957, the Russians, who were then wooing the Yugoslavs, obligingly changed the award to first place, transmuting bronze into gold!

No wonder Mićunović learned to avoid the head table and hover near the doorway during diplomatic receptions at which he feared that he might be the object of a frightening, even compromising, tirade by the histrionic Nikita Khrushchev. Alternately courted and berated, the ambassador of Yugoslavia felt lonely and beleaguered under the brusque, incessant pressures of his hosts, with their "he who is not with us is against us" mentality.

Besides admitting us into his feelings as ambassador of a small nation trying to stand up to Moscow on Moscow's turf, Mićunović gives a moving portrait of Khrushchev during the years when he was consolidating his power. He shows Khrushchev acting his ebullient and confident self at a diplomatic party on June 19, 1957, the very afternoon on which he had found himself on the losing side of an "arithmetic majority" in the Party Presidium and looked to be on the point of being ousted from power. Despite Khrushchev's coarseness, his brutality, even his paranoia—woe to the Soviet leader who, like Field Marshal Georgy Zhukov, dared to swim too close to Khrushchev at his Black Sea retreat—Mićunović was captivated by the man. He shows Khrushchev touring villages in the Don and Kuban areas of southern Russia and singing ancient Cossack songs with the peasants. But, he adds, "the mood left him when the time came for official meetings with us."

Mićunović believes that the bewildering twists and turns of Khrushchev's policies were the result of his own inconsistency and opportunism and not of pressure from Stalinists in the leadership, that Khrushchev fell from power in October 1964 for reasons of domestic not foreign policy, and that he might have held onto office had he bothered to show greater respect to the other Soviet leaders.

John F. Kennedy once pithily summed up Khrushchev's attitude in foreign affairs as "what's mine is mine, what's yours is negotiable." And what Kennedy said of Khrushchev remains true of Khrushchev's successors in the Kremlin today. For he, like them, was a product of Stalin's Russia, an exemplar, not an exception.

Mićunović's portrait does not alter our image of Nikita Khrushchev but it fascinates nonetheless—it deepens and adds nuance to the picture we already have.

Priscilla Johnson McMillan

Priscilla Johnson McMillan was a correspondent in Moscow and Belgrade, and is author of *Khrushchev and the Arts* (MIT Press). She is now an associate of the Russian Research Center, Harvard University.

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My ad reads:

THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE

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Kennedy's unexpected resurgence in New York and Connecticut probably cannot be explained as a wave of popular support for his recently announced solution to the dilemma of American relations with the Soviet Union: nothing less than a national commission to study the problem and come up with recommendations. The commission should be "broad-gauged," of course, and "bipartisan." In unveiling this proposal at Columbia University, Kennedy spoke of "the mutual mismanagement of American-Soviet relations," but he does not propose to put Russians on his commission. Instead, he released a list of 27 of the usual suspects who support the idea, and, presumably, would be only too happy to serve. Several are right-wingers who must despise Ted Kennedy, but apparently can't resist the opportunity to fly around and gas self-importantly at public expense. Calls for national commissions and demands that we "rise above partisan politics" (as Kennedy put it) are two sure signs that somebody has nothing to say. This is why President Carter has referred the productivity problem to his Presidential Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties. Surely it's time to rise above national commissions, and recognize that these problems are serious enough to be dealt with by partisan politics. Or perhaps we should just place the whole government in the hands of one grand national commission—call it a junta—composed of John J. McCloy, Coretta Scott King, Father Hesburgh, Irving Shapiro, Lady Bird Johnson, Leonard Woodcock, Hedley Donovan, George Ball, Bill Moyers, Joan Mondale, John Gardner . . . have I forgotten anybody? Let's have a contest. Who can come up with the best list of 12 names to serve on a National Commission for Everything? Prizes will be awarded for the three most outstanding entries: a book of your choice from the extensive New Republic Books catalogue. The judges will consider general eminence and lack of controversy; geographical and professional variety; and of course ethnic, racial, sexual, and political balance. Points will be awarded for dullness and senescence, but the actually deceased, however apt (Margaret Mead, Milton Eisenhower, Jackie Robinson, and so on) are not eligible.

The public opinion pollsters are trying hard this year to demonstrate that they can do more than just show who's up and who's down, since they're doing that so badly. They probe deeply into voter attitudes in order to come up with insights like this one in a *New York Times* story analyzing the latest *Times*/CBS poll on the Democratic race: "Those who like the way the President is running things favor him by a little more than 3 to 1; those who do not like the way the President is running things back Mr. Kennedy by a similar margin." Since the main theme of Carter's television commercials is that his family lives in the White House, perhaps we should be impressed that people still seem to be voting on the basis of whether they like the way he's running things. On the other hand, perhaps we should despair for people's common sense, since Carter manifestly is *not* running things well, whereas his family really does live in the White House. A more interesting measure of Kennedy's standing than any opinion poll is the price in the bookstores for his embarrassing collection of photographs and aphorisms, *Our Day and Generation* (published by Simon and Schuster; forward by Archibald MacLeish—a natural for our commission). Released only a few months ago at $12.95, the "book" was being remaindered for $2.95 in Washington on the day of the New York primary. This 77 percent drop must stand as the greatest, perhaps the only, success of Carter's anti-inflation plan. Stocks and bonds have not plunged nearly as far, yet.

Senator William Proxmire, author of the Golden Fleece Awards for foolish government expenditures, has had to pay $10,000 to settle a libel suit by a social scientist whose research he ridiculed. The government has had to pay $130,000 in legal costs for Proxmire's defense. This is on top of the $500,000 the government paid for the scientist's research on aggressiveness in monkeys. This scientist apparently is a litigious fellow. Were it otherwise, I would be inclined to observe that he is an aggressive little monkey himself. (But I am *not* saying this, you see. Is that clear?) If there is any kind of comment that deserves First Amendment protection from the threat of libel suits, it is comment about how government money is spent. People who take government grants ought to have to tolerate criticism of what they are doing. Or so it seems to me. But the Supreme Court says differently, so I must be wrong. The only recourse I can see is henceforth to impugn, vigorously but in the abstract, all social so-called scientists who waste the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars on their silly, extravagant, worthless, onanistic, and often downright evil projects. I mention no names. You know who you are.

Given an absolutely free choice in the matter, which is what we are assured the shah was given, he naturally chose to have a delicate cancer operation in an Egyptian army hospital rather than use the pitiful medical facilities available here in the United States. Wouldn't you? It's a sad comment on the quality of American health care that even a personal visit from Hamilton Jordan couldn't persuade the shah to accept our hospitality. Actually, it's hard to get too worked up over the shah's health. There must be hundreds of other people in Panama who are equally sick, and morally more deserving of being flown out for expert medical attention. It's amusing to hear right-wingers, who ridicule attempts to enforce human rights standards on our various despot friends as soft and unpractical, suddenly get all weepy and indignant about letting practical considerations interfere with any kindnesses we might wish to do for the poor old shah. That said, what practical consideration prevented our behaving with a bit more grace last week? Letting the shah out of Panama is supposed to have undermined, in some unspecified way, progress toward release of the hostages. What progress? Well, say the White House people, Bani-Sadr was making progress in persuading the militants that Panama would let the shah be extradicted. In other words, there was progress toward complete surrender to the militants' demands. Now, if we want to give in completely, we will have to stage an Entebbe-style raid on the Egyptian hospital, pick up the shah (minus his spleen), and deliver him to Tehran. That would be a show of American strength.

M.E.K.

Coming:

Shirley Hazzard on the UN Commission in Tehran.

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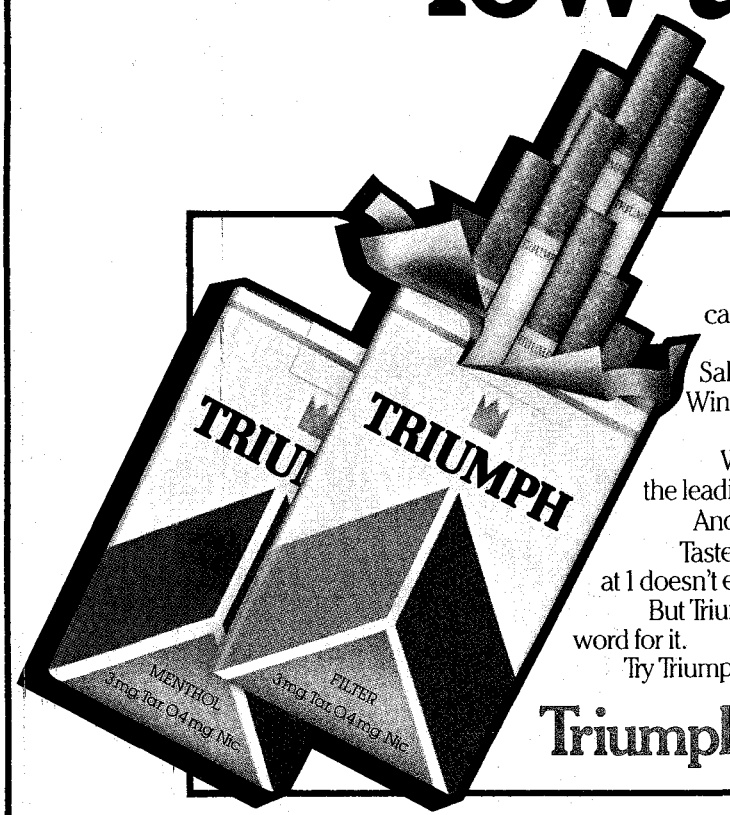

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